

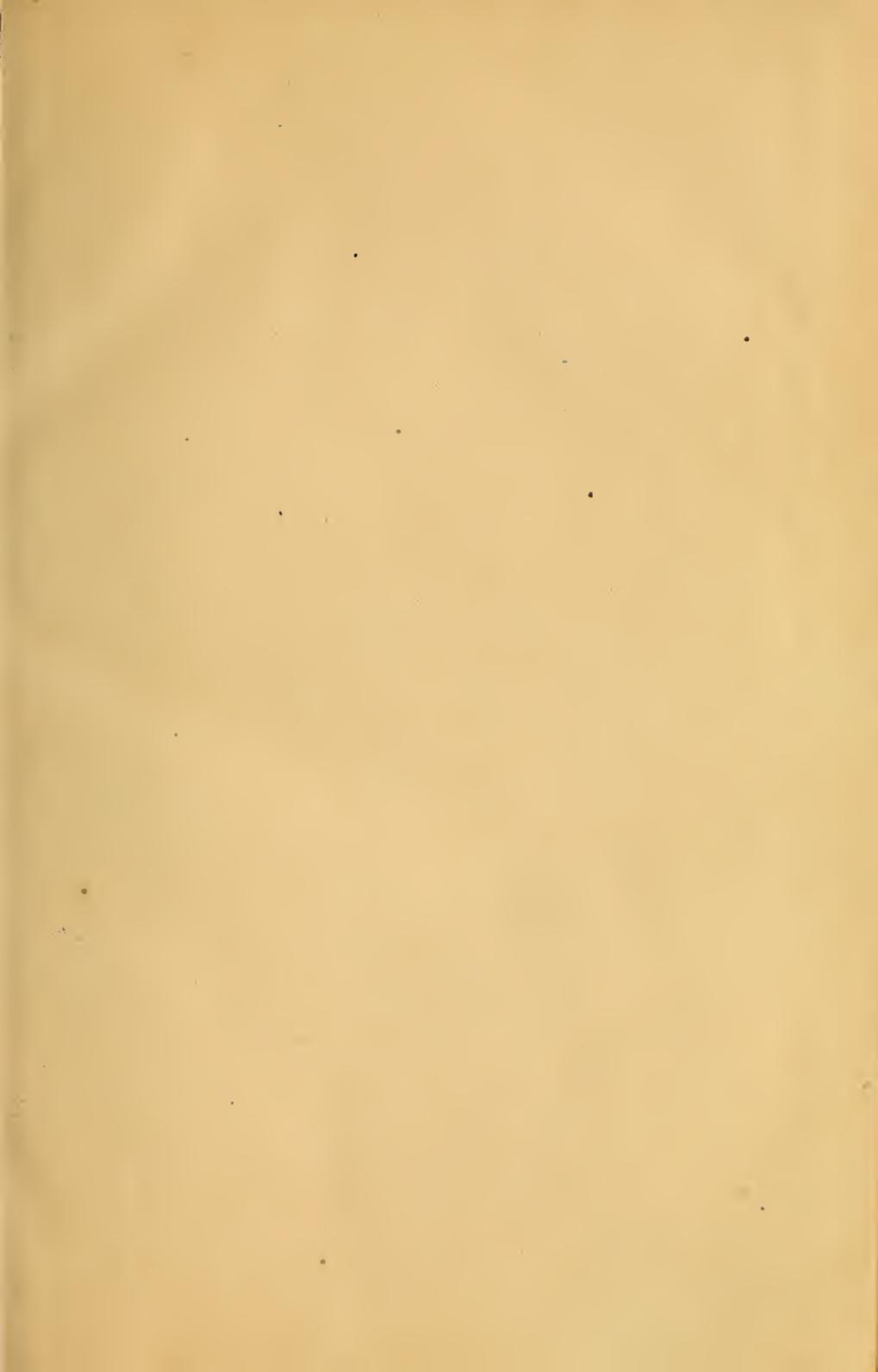


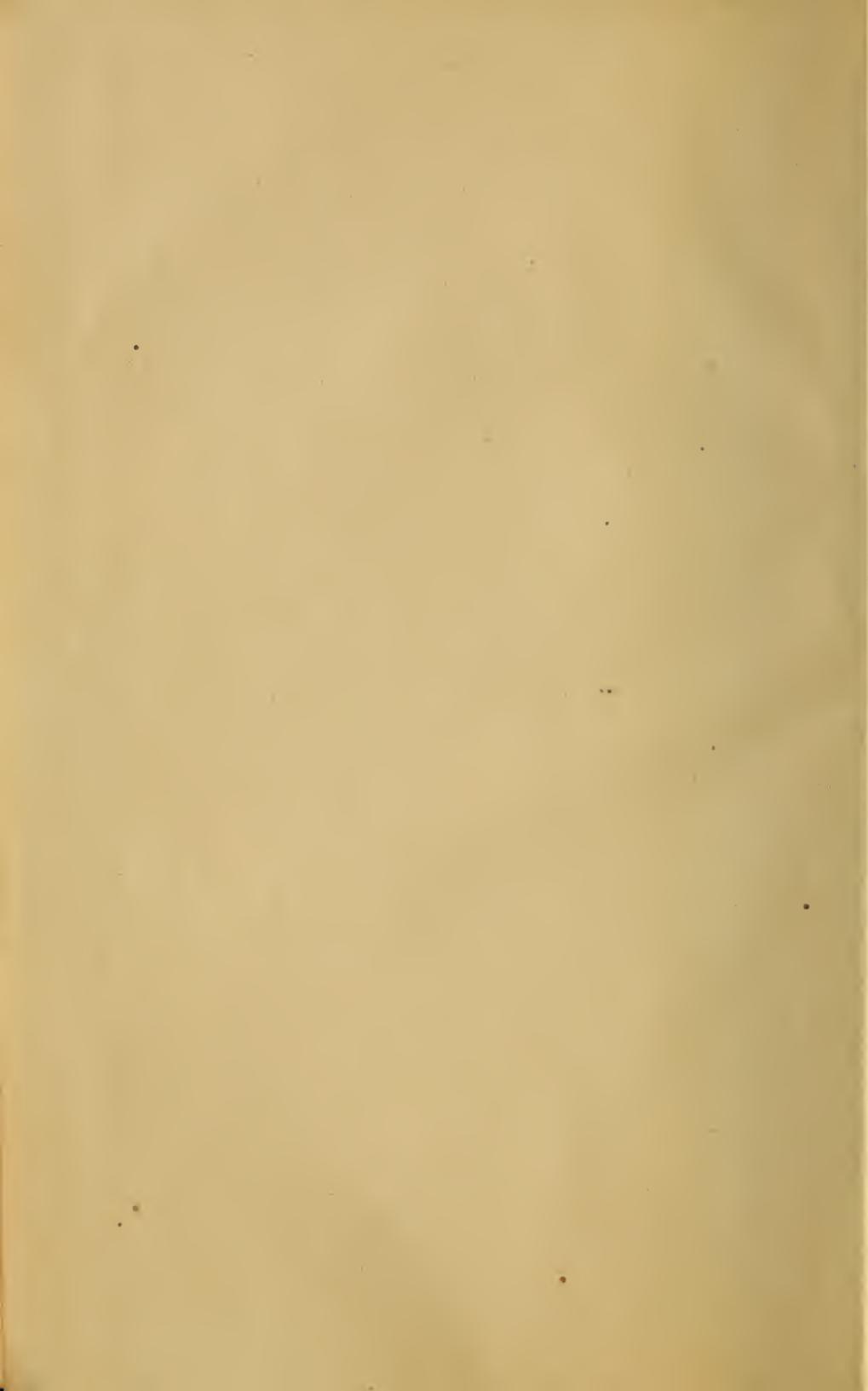
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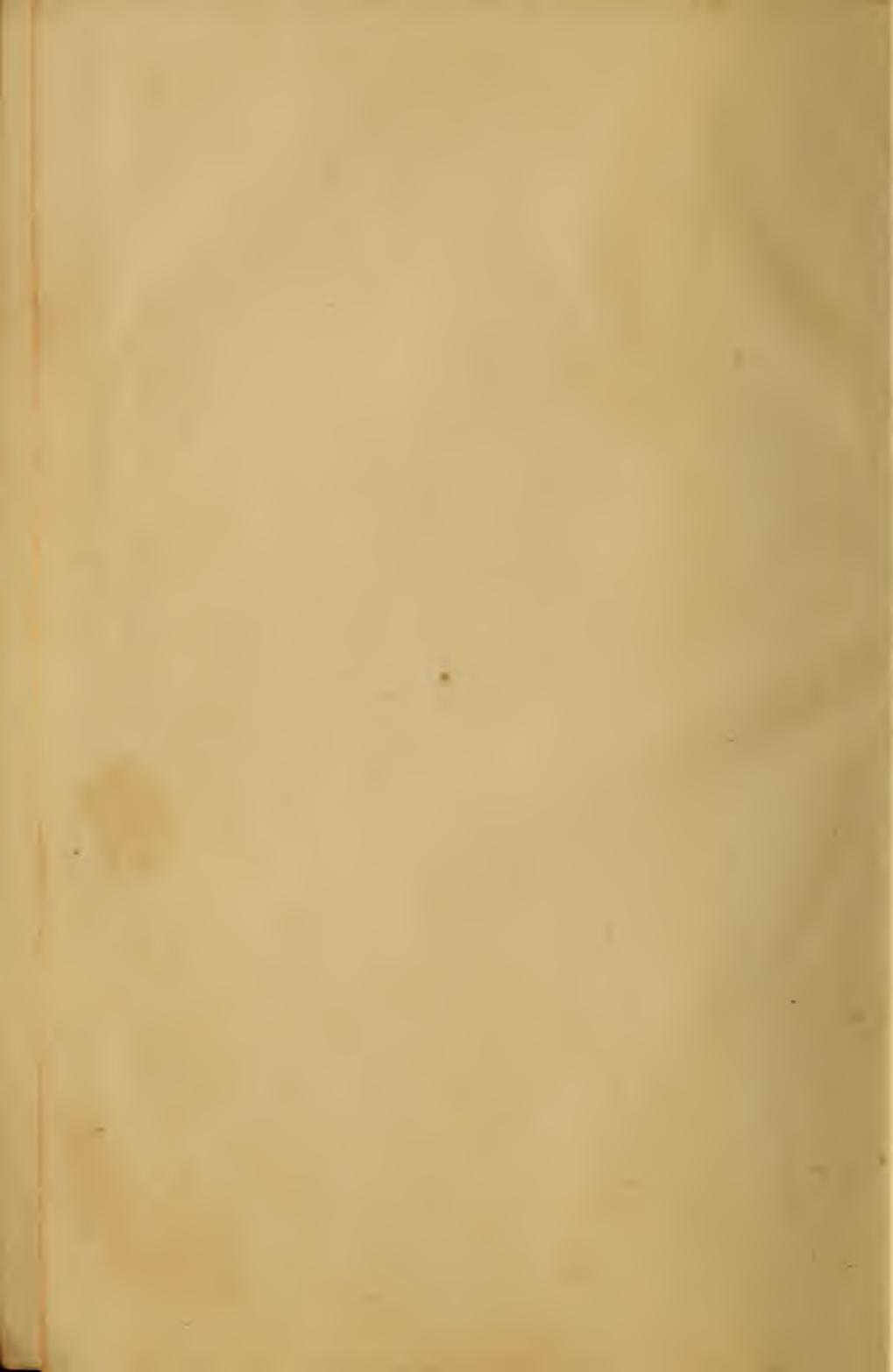
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.











THE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
DISPENDED

WITH AN EXAMINATION INTO THE CLAIMS OF
METHODIST EPISCOPACY.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS ADDRESSED

TO THE

REV. ALLEN STEELE,

WITH HIS REPLIES.

BY JAMES A. BOLLES, A. M.
Rector of St. James' Church, Batavia, N. Y.

PRINTED
BY FREDERICK FOLLETT,
BATAVIA, N. Y.
1843.

Henry Ward Beecher
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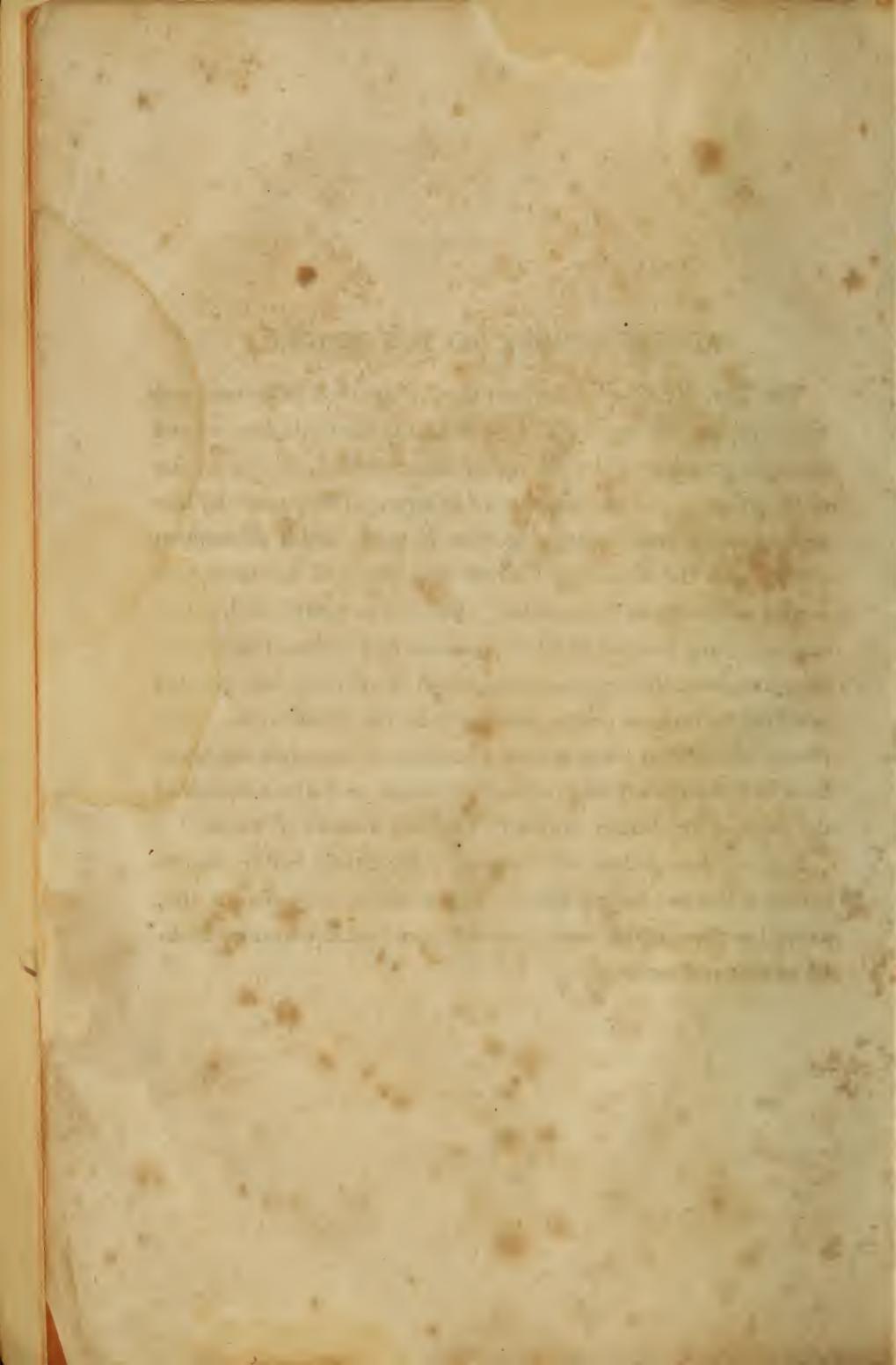
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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

The Rev. Mr. Steele to whom these letters are addressed and whose replies are inserted, is considered the most able, learned and eloquent preacher of the Methodist denomination, in this section of the country. In consequence of charges publicly made by him against individuals, *mentioning them by name*, and a subsequent attack upon the Episcopal Church in a series of Lectures, this correspondence was commenced. But it is now published, not on account of any interest which it possesses as a personal controversy, but to meet the arguments by which the Church is at present assailed, in various places, especially by the Methodists. The reader will find in these letters, a number of rare and important facts and documents relating to Methodism; and also a review of the Book of Dr. Bangs, entitled "*Original Church of Christ.*"

Some of these letters were not sent to Mr. Steele for the reasons stated in the concluding letter. Those which were sent to him, as well as those which were received from him, are here published as sent and received.



BATAVIA, September 7, 1842.

To the Rev. ALLEN STEELE:—

Dear Sir—I am informed that some time since, you read a communication to your congregation, relating, in part, to myself,—*mentioning me by name*—and containing such charges, expressed or implied, as were calculated to injure my character and influence in the estimation of this community.

Now, as I am not conscious of having given any just cause of offence either to yourself or your Methodist brethren, I cannot withhold from you the respectful expression of my opinion, that this attack upon my character, is altogether unkind and unjustifiable; and when I consider the many substantial proofs which my people have given to you of their regard, I am at a loss to understand the *reasons* of this sudden attempt to hold us up to the scorn and ridicule of the world.

True it is, that between you as a Methodist and myself as an Episcopalian, there is a wide difference of opinion on the important subjects of Church government and order, and most happy should I be at any time, in a calm and dispassionate manner, to discuss or examine those differences with you. But such is the nature of your present attack, that no other course seems to be left to me, than plainly and honestly to enter my solemn protest against this extraordinary arraignment,—an arraignment of which no notice had been previously given to me, which forestalls public opinion and which denies to me the common privilege of self-defence.

In the celebrated controversy which took place some years ago, between Bishop Hobart and Dr. Mason, (to which I take the liberty of referring you,) the former was accused of “*uncharitableness*

and bigotry," of maintaining the alternative of "*Episcopacy or perdition;*" and it was upon this pretended ground of defence against the exclusiveness of such a doctrine, that the controversy was commenced: But this accusation the now sainted Hobart utterly disclaimed; he declared it to be "*ungenerous and unjust,*" and quoted the following remarks of Bishop Horsly, as containing the sentiments of his own heart;—and now, as adopting and cherishing the same, I beg leave to quote them and with them to close my letter.

"Though truth in these controversies can be only on one side, I will indulge and I will avow the charitable opinion, that sincerity may be on both. And I will enjoy the reflection that by an equal sincerity, through the power of that blood which was shed equally for all, both parties may at length find equal mercy. In the transport of this holy hope, I will anticipate that glorious consummation, when faith shall be absorbed in knowledge, and the fire of controversy forever quenched; when the same generous zeal for God and truth, which too often in this world of folly and confusion, sets those at widest variance, whom the similitude of virtuous feelings should most unite, shall be the cement of an indissoluble friendship; when the innumerable multitudes of all nations, kindreds and people, (why should I not add, of all sects and parties?) assembled round the Throne, shall, like the first Christians, be of one soul and one mind, giving praise with one consent to Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb that was slain to redeem them by his blood."

Very Respectfully, &c.

JAMES A. BOLLES.

BATAVIA, Sept. 17, 1842.

Rev. MR. BOLLES:—

Dear Sir—Yours of the 1st inst. has been received, and I hasten to reply. If I understand your communication (for there is a vagueness about some parts of it which leaves me in doubt as to

the extent of meaning you designed to attach to it.) As I understand your letter, it contains a *complaint of injustice—a challenge to discussion—a threat of exposure, and a profession of christian charity.* I will notice each of these briefly.

And first, you complain of an unjust attack upon yourself and Church. This appears to be based upon the reading of a communication to my congregation in which you were called by name and which as you assert contained charges injurious to your character and influence, and that too, when upon your part there had been no just cause of offence, but many substantial proofs of your regard. In reference to this complaint, I acknowledge the reading of a communication addressed to me from the "Leaders Meeting of St. John's Church," in which is found the following language:—"At a Leaders' Meeting held at St. John's Church on the 25th instant, (July) it was unanimously resolved, that you (i.e. myself,) be requested to deliver a few sermons on the subject of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in order to disabuse the public mind against the efforts lately, and now being made to prejudice the community against Methodism, by the introduction of anonymous pamphlets attacking the character and regulations of the Methodist Episcopal Church as lately done by the Rt. Rev. WILLIAM H. DE LANCY, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church for the Diocese of Western New York, and the distribution of the same by the Rev. James A. Bolles, Rector of St. James' Church, Batavia, Genesee Co., N. Y." I acknowledge that the reading of this communication, if the allegation be *false*, would have furnished you with ground of complaint. And had I entertained *any doubt* of its *truth*, it would have been proper for me to have either declined reading it, or called on you for information. But what are the facts in the case? Will you deny the charge? It is not necessary for me here to remind you of the circulation of Tract No. 4—a Tract *without the name of the author, printer, or publisher*—yet used by your Clergy for sectarian purposes, and in this place (as is evident) for keeping persons from uniting with the Methodist Episcopal Chuch—a Tract, the matter of which is made up of *garbled extracts and false statements*.

I need not tell you that when the thing became public, and we contemplated an exposure of the attack, you sought for peace, and peace was granted—I need not tell you of the introduction, per your order, in direct violation of your proposed desire of peace and friendship; of Tract No. 5, in which you attack not only *us*, but *all* Churches not Episcopal, in *your* sense of the term, and set up *YOUR* “Episcopacy or perdition.” I need not tell you of the reading of Dr. Chapman’s Sermons in your Church, than which, none perhaps, are more exclusive or denunciatory. With these and a large class of similar facts, you are familiar. And can you say, sir, with these facts before you, that there was no cause of offence? And what if (as you claim,) your people had given proofs of friendship, are tokens of *private* friendship to be taken into the account when the Church in which I have been nurtured is assailed?—My Mother branded with *hypocrite*, *impostor*, and all her children turned over to the *uncovenanted* mercies of God, and no hope of heaven held out to them only on the ground of uniting with her defamers. *Private friendship!* what has this to do with my *official* duties as a Minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, and my obligations to God and the Church of which I am a member? Am I to remain in silence and see my Mother *slandered*, *robbed*, *murdered*, because, forsooth, the murderer claims to be my friend? If you take me for a Judas you are mistaken in the man. Rather let thy *money* and thy *friendship* perish with thee, than that I should betray the charge committed to my care. I love my Mother too well not to defend her, especially when she has *truth* on her side. And as the Minister set over the spiritual interests of the people worshipping in St. John’s Church, am I to stand still and see a neighboring minister write hypocrite & imposter upon our Church, our Pulpit, our Altar, our Baptismal Font—upon all our ministrations, and because he claims to be my *friend*, and says he wishes us peace and prosperity, and would deprecate exceedingly any hostility of feeling between us, say nothing? Why, to urge the claim of friendship under such circumstances only adds to the injury, insult and abuse, and warrants a conclusion, if it be true, which to you, would be any thing but honorable. By what prin-

ciple of High Churchism could you have been governed in lending your influence and money (as you claim you did) for the erection of St. John's Church—nay, be the *originator* of it, as you have more than once asserted, if, in our ministrations there, as you would *now* fain have the public believe, we are guilty of *stated profanation*, whereas, if it had not been erected, many of us might perhaps, have found a place at St. James' in the *regular succession*, and had a part in the *covenant mercies* of God? Is this evidence of your friendship and regard for our salvation, or proof of a *recklessness* of our eternal interests? The plea for gratitude, if well founded, would not be to your honor as a High Churchman, but disgrace.

So far from attacking you, and yours, we claim to act on the *defensive*, and so an enlightened public will understand it. What! am I attacking you in proving the validity of my credentials, after being published by you as an *impostor*? An effort has been made again and again to prejudice this community against Methodism by proclaiming that we are not a Church—had no Ministry nor Sacraments; efforts which I could but look upon as jesuitical, wanton, unauthorized and inconsistent with the charities of the Gospel, and without a parallel in my experience! To remain in silence under *such* circumstances, I considered would be sin.—Our Church thought so, also, and requested me to disabuse the community, and show to the people that we *were a church* according to *Scripture* and *primitive usage*. And which, in the name of the Great Head of the Church I *commenced* doing, and in his name shall endeavor to *accomplish* to the *BEST* of my ability.

And here let me inquire, what have I done to provoke this attack upon us, and our institutions—to provoke “this extraordinary arraignment—this effort to hold us up to the scorn and ridicule of the world”? Have my ministrations here warranted *such* an attack—or *any* attack? Have I not walked before the people here as a Minister of Peace? Have I preached a sermon here previous to this defence on a controverted point of Theology as held by Orthodox Churches? Have I attempted to proselyte from your Church? I challenge an instance. Why, then, have you

thus attempted to hold us up to the scorn and ridicule of this community? Under these circumstances, if any respect is due ourselves, as we venerate the pious dead and would honor the truth, it becomes our duty to show the attack to be unjust, and that our cause was of God, and no cry of *persecution*, of *ingratitude*, or *threat* of a withdrawal of *friendship* or *money*, or all, at this late hour, will deter us from this work of justice—nothing but a distinct denial upon your part of the doctrine of the Tracts, (Nos. 4 & 5,) as being the doctrine of your Church.

In regard to your *challenge*, if you designed it as one, though I am not a man of war, and Phrenologists do not give me a very prominent "War bump," though sufficiently large for all the ordinary purposes of life, yet knowing "Twice is he armed who knows his cause is just," I shall not decline an examination of our differences, provided the necessary preliminaries can be settled, and I am happy to have your avowal that this difference is "*wide*." There is indeed a *vast difference* between *Romanism* and *Protestantism*. You are aware, however, that we occupy a very different position than that of Dr. Mason, to which you refer. An *honorable* peace I prefer to war, but war, to dishonorable peace. As to the threat of *exposure*, you are at liberty to make any protest to the public against the course I have taken in this defence that you see proper. I shall abide the issue, nor shall I complain of being "denied the common privilege of self-defence," As I acknowledge no such power in this land of Christian Liberty, and no such deprivation of right.

Your professions of Charity at the close of your letter, I take as evidence that your *heart* is better than your *head*—for with what kind of consistency with your principles as a High Churchman can you expect that I, a false teacher, an imposter, who claim to be something, a Minister of the Lord Jesus, when I am nothing, that I shall find equal mercy with yourself? What! a Methodist Minister, who has not received the Sacraments of the Church—who has believed, and taught, and practised the most damning heresies, shall, though unbaptized, unordained, mingle with the High Churchman around the throne of God, and join

forever in the praises of the Most High? Are you sincere, sir? Then where is the *jus divinum* of your Episcopacy? And why this mighty effort to unchurch your neighbors?

In conclusion I will only say, that there are many things in your Church that I admire. I have strong attachments to her—I wish her prosperity in her aggressions upon the territory of sin. But when she attempts to unchurch others, and claims to be the *only* primitive, Apostolical Church—THE CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES—calls the Ministry of other Churches and their ordinances invalid, she must not think it strange if such arrogance and lordly assumption is met with argument and Christian rebuke. In this defence I stand where the early Gentile convert stood in opposing the Jewish bigotry of the Temple—where your ancestors stood in resisting the usurpations of Papal Rome—nor do I design to abandon these pure doctrines of a pure Protestantism, but wish it to be distinctly understood, that I have entered an eternal protest against the lordly claims of these self-styled successors of the Apostles—against the semi-Popery of Oxford Tractarians, and their coadjutors in Western New York.

With an ardent desire that we may be mutual sharers in the covenant mercies of God, both here and in that world where bigoted exclusiveness will never be permitted to disturb the peace of its inhabitants, I subscribe myself

Your very dear (tho' unacknowledged,)
Brother and fellow Laborer in the
Kingdom of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ,
ALLEN STEELE.

BATAVIA, Sept. 19, 1842.

To the Rev. A. STEELE:—

Dear Sir—Although I would not presume to doubt your assertion, that “Phrenologists do not give you a very prominent war-bump,” yet it does seem to me (and you must excuse this pleasantry) that the bump of “*Ideality*,” is pretty largely developed,

for really, your imagination has conjured up a great many spectres, with which certainly, I had no design of haunting you. Are you in earnest in supposing that my letter contained a "challenge" in the ordinary acceptation of that term?—or any "threat of exposure or of the withdrawal of friendship or money?" May not an individual propose a calm and dispassionate discussion or examination without sending a "challenge?" Is there no difference between a *solemn protest* and a "threat of exposure?" Can a "withdrawal of friendship or money" be intended, when no such expressions are used, nor any allusion made to them at all? Is a frank declaration of christian kindness and love, to be regarded as nothing more than a mere "*profession of charity*?" Be assured sir, you have mistaken entirely the spirit of my letter; for, fearing that you might be extremely sensitive, I endeavored to guard it against every thing which could possibly give you offence.

But what are the charges which you bring against me? That I have published you a "false teacher and impostor"?—that to injury I have added "insult and abuse"?—that I have "taken you for a Judas" and "written hypocrite and impostor upon your church, your pulpit, your altar, your baptismal font and all your ministrations"?—that I have "unchurched you and turned you over to the uncovenanted mercies of God, and held out no hope of Heaven excepting on the ground of uniting with your defamers"?—that I have "slandered, robbed and murdered your mother," and still claim to be your friend"?—that I have acted towards you in a "jesuitical, wanton and unauthorized" manner, "inconsistent with the charities of the Gospel, and without a parallel in your experience"?—that I am actuated by "Jewish bigotry" and "bigoted exclusiveness"?—that I am sustaining "the usurpations of Papal Rome" and am a "coadjutor of the semi-popery of Oxford tractarians, in Western New-York"? Why, such a catalogue of high crimes and misdemeanors ought to consign me to the gallows. But I will not do you the injustice to suppose, that all these charges are intended for me, though either directly or indirectly you apply them to me,—and though if I should follow your example in imagining others, a still longer catalogue might be

easily conjured up from the many strange expressions in your letter. These hard names and epithets are more easily employed than substantiated—other and better men than myself have been reproached by them, and therefore my only emotions are those of sorrow, that you should so far forget yourself, as to think the occasion sufficient to call them forth.

But you acknowledge the reading of a document to your congregation, stating that Bishop De Lancey had introduced “anonymous pamphlets, attacking the character and regulations of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that the same pamphlets had been distributed by me,” and you assert that “they are used by our Clergy for sectarian purposes, &c. &c. Now you will readily grant, that the fact of “the Leaders of St. John’s Church” having placed this document in your hands does not make its statements true, nor does the fact that you read it to the public and thus gave to it the sanction of your name, make those statements true; for no man or set of men, however honest or sincere, can *manufacture* evidence, where none exists. And so far as Bishop De Lancey is concerned, I fearlessly assert that there is not the *slightest* ground for the allegation brought against him. Nay, some of your own people, your “Leaders” I presume, procured a quantity of the Tract No. 4 on Methodism, and together with Dr. Peck’s reply, you placed them in the Bookstore either for sale or gratuitous distribution, and therefore the charge brought against the Bishop, might with much more justice be brought against yourselves. Let this fact be remembered, that the Methodists placed the Tract No. 4, on Methodism, in the Bookstore, and not Bishop De Lancey or myself, as many have been led to suppose. But what are the only pretended grounds for the allegation? They are simply these,—that Dr. Peck has stated in his pamphlet, that he “called at a respectable Bookstore in the city of New-York, to obtain a copy of Tract No. 4 and was told, that the Bishop of the Western Diocese of this State, had taken all they had on hand for the use of his Diocese.” Dr. Peck does not mention the name of the Bookstore nor in what part of the city it was, nor who was the individual who gave him the information, nor indeed whether

the person had any connection whatever with the store. Now I ask you,—is this a sufficient ground on which to build a public accusation against the character of a christian Brother? Is there any substantial foundation here for the charges which you have made? Is this doing to others as we would that they should do unto us? Would your people or would my people bear me out in making the most serious public accusations against you, founded merely upon the second hand information of some unknown informant in the city of New-York? But more than this, some of your "Leaders," or one certainly, was informed before that communication was made known to your congregation, that Bishop De Lancey had remarked at the time of his last visit to this place, that he had never seen or read the Tract at all. Was not this information as good as the other, and in all fairness at least, should it not have been communicated in connection with the other? If, instead of stating as a fact a mere inference of your "Leaders," you had given to the congregation the precise language of Dr. Peck, do you suppose that the sensible members of your flock would have justified the proceeding? Ah! my friend, we must learn a better lesson than this. We must learn not to exaggerate and torture the truth at any time, and especially should we strive to be tender of each other's character and reputation.

What a plight are we in? We have circulated a false report against an absent brother, and as falsehood travels faster than truth, we must forever renounce all hope of being able entirely to undo the wrong; and can we expect that Methodism, that Episcopalianism or that Christianity under any form, will be permitted to prosper by such efforts as these? Are not the common obligations of morality as binding upon "those who profess and call themselves christians," as they are upon the men of the world? Do we not know that a blessing is pronounced upon that man who "hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbor, and hath not slandered his neighbor"? True, this injury may not have been intended, and those who have been engaged in it may be "good men and christians;" but this does not excuse the evils of haste and inconsideration,—for we are all old enough to know better.

But how is the allegation sustained in reference to myself? All the information that you have upon the subject, you have received from others. You have never deigned to introduce the matter to me, and yet the opportunity has been afforded you again and again, for I have called upon you much oftener than you have upon me. You must excuse me therefore, if I presume that you have been misled as to facts, and that if you had followed the scripture rule "if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone," then such an explanation might have been given as would have convinced you of your error. There never was a congregation formed under auspices more favorable than your own, nor one in relation to which every member of the community was more kindly disposed, and therefore any complaint that attempts have been made to prejudice the people against you, is altogether out of place. The subscription for your house was a general one, drawn up by myself, and containing an appeal to the liberality of all our citizens; and with the exception of the indiscreet and over anxious zeal of a few, nothing has occurred to mar the harmony that existed and ought always to exist between the inhabitants of the same vicinity. Some, however, instead of waiting for that kind of growth which is not the less permanent because it is slow, seemed determined to bring every individual at once into the fold; and relying upon the acknowledged talents and popularity of their minister, whose services they could not long expect to enjoy, they determined to make the most of the time; and forgetting in their haste the common courtesies of brethren, they have been, we fear, regardless whether their converts came from the world or from the other established congregations around them. What was the sentiment once uttered both in your hearing and in mine, when you were urged to unite in the efforts making by Elder Marshall? "we shall get all the converts." Not, is it right or wrong, but "we shall get all the converts." These efforts, however, gave me no concern, nor did I consider them deserving either of notice or complaint; for though young, I have lived long enough in the world to know, that sensible people cannot easily be moved, and

that the arts of proselytism are generally well understood and in the end defeat themselves. But when I found that Books were in circulation, such as never before had appeared in this village, to my knowledge, containing the grossest miststatements in relation to the true doctrines of the Episcopal Church, and published under the high sanction of the "Methodist Book Concern;" and when one of those Books was brought to me as coming directly from yourself, then indeed I put two copies of Tract No. 4 in circulation, not among your people, however, but my own. Then followed a most unusual ferment in certain quarters, and my name became the theme of conversation in stores and offices, and persons wishing to know what awful deed I had done, came for the Tract. As my original number was but a half dozen, they were soon distributed and I was obliged to send for a half dozen more, all I have ever had. Among the persons who came for the Tract was a Gentleman of your church, but with much hesitaion, and not until after expressing my desire not to do it, did I give one to him. Under no other circumstances, and in no other way, have I given a single copy to any individual not connected with St. James' Church.

Suppose, now, that we reconsider these facts. As early as 1836 a number of anonymous articles appeared in the Advocate & Journal (Methodist paper,) containing the grossest abuse of the Episcopal Church—so grossly abusive that they were briefly and most effectually replied to in the Churchman by a Methodist Minister. Soon afterwards, however, these articles were collected together and published in a Book by the "Methodist Book concern," under the deceptive title of the "Original Church of Christ," by Dr. Bangs, and sustained and recommended by resolutions of Conferences, &c. &c.—and the said book has already passed through two editions. Then, following this, were two Tracts compiled by the same Dr. Bangs and published by the same "Concern," and intended more immediately for dissemination among the people. In one of these Tracts, among other things, our Bishops are charged with "brutal stupidity, ignorance and wickedness." And again: "Such is the magic influence of

the Oil of Consecration, that these men are instantly metamorphosed into saints, into legitimate successors of the Apostles!"—In the other Tract, the rites, ceremonies and usages of the Church are taken up and caricatured—Confirmation is represented as a "relic of Romish superstition,"—prescribed forms of prayer are ridiculed as though our people, in times of sickness &c., "can in no otherwise pray than as they are directed by a prescribed form,"—our Conventions are spoken of as composed of men who "neither fear God nor work righteousness," and our Church is charged with "the allowing of Balls and Theatres." Here let it be remembered that we date the beginning of these beautiful specimens of Christian kindness and truth as far back as 1836. But has the Episcopal Church taken any notice of these publications? No sir. Though the provocation was a great one, yet the Church has not departed from her invariable rule, never under her sanction to utter a word of "party slang," or to mingle at all in party controversy. She considers herself a Church, and not a Sect. She feels her security as built "upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," and she knows, therefore, that "the gates of Hell cannot prevail against her." All that has ever appeared in her defence has originated with private individuals, in their private capacity, and on their own private responsibility. And now some country clergyman, finding, as I did, that the Books referred to were disseminated among his people, that "Leaders" were forgetting to lead in paths of righteousness and peace—some such clergyman has taken the pains during the *last year*, to collect the sentiments of Mr. Wesley in relation to the Church—to show what were his intentions in establishing the Methodist Society, and how far these intentions have been departed from—to show who it was, that *he* regarded as his spiritual Mother, and whether others might not be mistaken as to their parentage; presuming that the first-born son would be more likely to know the Mother than the grand-children to the third and fourth generation,* and being

*MR. WESLEY said that he was the "Father of all the Methodists," and he frequently spoke of the Church as "his Mother."

unwilling and unable, perhaps, to endure the odium which even this slight attempt would be likely to cast upon him, he has published those sentiments without name. But at the same time he has given the "edition of Mr. Wesley's Works printed at the Conference Office 1840," as that from which his extracts are taken, so that every individual may examine the authorities for himself.

But what are your objections to the Tract? That it is "made up of garbled extracts and false statements"? Let me tell you, Sir, that you are mistaken in this; and had you compared the extracts with Mr. Wesley's works, I can scarcely believe that you would have hazarded the assertion; for I have myself examined both, and I find not only an exact agreement between the copy and the original, but that much more might have been selected, bearing upon the same points, and equally to the purpose. True, the Tract does not profess to give all the writings of Mr. Wesley, and therefore it contains extracts only, but those extracts are not "garbled," nor do they misstate the genuine sentiments of the author at the time when he wrote them. Let the individual who desires satisfaction examine for himself.

Again you object that it is "without the name of the Author, Printer or Publisher." This is an objection which unthinking people will be apt to regard as sound; but let us consider it as men. If there is truth in it, then it is mighty and can prevail without names, and if there is error, then it must fall, and should have no names even for a moment to sustain it; and for my own part, I wish that all works, merely controversial, being more or less mixed with error, were stripped of every extraneous support and were allowed to stand upon their own intrinsic merits. What has hitherto sustained the controversial works of Dr. Bangs? Nothing but the name; and I venture to say that if they were now published anonymous, as they were originally, no well informed Methodist would regard them as authority, and the injury which they have done and are destined still to do, would be infinitely less. In all such works let facts be given, and let a reference be made to the source, whence a knowledge of those facts is deri-

ved, and then let each individual be allowed to judge for himself, of the conclusions which those facts warrant. I have great confidence myself in the intuitive judgment of the people, especially when no artful special pleadings are resorted to, to bias their minds—and I have still greater confidence in their “sober second thought,” notwithstanding the influence of all such pleadings.

Now reflect upon the facts here brought to light, and make it a serious question with the conscience, whether they are such as to afford a just foundation for the charges which you have publicly brought against me. Remember, too, that all the consequences which have resulted from that unfortunate step, are in some degree attributable to it. All the heart-burnings, and bickerings, and evil speakings, even among friends and neighbors—(though thanks to a merciful God, my own people have in general been enabled to possess their souls in patience)—all the false reports which Rumor, with her hundred tongues, has carried into the surrounding country, that I have fallen into the horrible pit of Romanism and Infidelity—that my people are leaving me daily and renouncing all interest in me, and that having, from envy, commenced an attack upon the Methodists, I am undeserving of public sympathy and support. “Is this thy kindness to thy friend”? Is this the treatment of a christian brother? Have I not reason to complain, after all, that you are the man who has “unchurched his neighbor and cast him out of covenanted mercy”? But I forbear to dwell upon this point. We have been forewarned that “if they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, much more they of his household”—that if we would live godly in Christ Jesus, we must suffer persecution. And though, as you suggest, “an enlightened public” may sustain you in this, yet I have one consolation of which no earthly power can deprive me, and it arises from the conviction of my own conscience, that “my witness is in Heaven, my record is on high.”

An intimation is contained in your letter, that fearing an exposure, I sued for peace, and peace having been granted, then in direct violation of my professed desire, another Tract was intro-

duced, &c. &c. Of course you do not mean here that any thing of this kind occurred as between you and myself, though one would suppose so from reading your letter, but only that you received this information, perhaps, from one of your Leaders. Now, as I do not wish to have any controversy with any of these gentlemen, I will not deny the fact, but will only remark, that I cannot possibly imagine any thing, from which it could have arisen. Let me suggest, that if the minds of these gentlemen had been in the same state of excitement with your own, then a casual conversation with me, may have been as much mistaken as you have mistaken the purport of my first letter, and that *inferences drawn by them* may have been stated to you as facts coming from me. This is a very common way of mistake, and some remarks on the subject by Dr. Barns, in his commentary on Romans 3; 8th, are exceedingly valuable, to which I respectfully refer you.

But again you say that no "cry of persecution, of ingratitude, or threat of the withdrawal of friendship or money, or all, at this late hour, will deter you from this work of *justice*: nothing but a distinct denial on my part of the doctrines of the Tracts, Nos. 4 & 5, as being the doctrines of our Church." Let the reader turn to my letter and see what foundation there is for such talk as this. What "cry of persecution or injustice," what "threat of a withdrawal of friendship or of money," or any thing else—what "desire to deter you from this work of justice"? Really I supposed that your Lectures were finished—that having every thing to yourself, and being allowed to go on without molestation or a single word of complaint, you had "accomplished" the whole object, "to the *best* of your ability," and broken every link in our Apostolic succession, as you declared that you would do. The Lectures were commenced before I left home, and having been absent a little more than three weeks, I supposed that you had finished. But if you have not, then I beg you to go on, and all I ask is, that you will communicate your arguments to me by letter, and I pledge myself, at least to show you some mistakes, into which the best of men are liable to fall; and not doubting

the excellency and sincerity of your character, I shall expect when these mistakes are pointed out, that you will cheerfully and frankly admit them.

But to the Tracts. Having seen an advertisement in the Churchman, that some Tracts had been published on "the Christian ministry," I requested the Bookseller, in sending for other books, also to send for some of those, and this is the Tract No. 5, to which you allude. And what does it contain? An argument to prove the three orders of the ministry as held by the Episcopal Church. I cannot therefore deny that it contains our doctrines, for in the Preface to our Ordination Service in our Prayer Book are these words, "It is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles time there have been these three orders in the christian ministry, Bishops, Priests and Deacons." Surely you would not have me assume the awful responsibility of denying that, which those old Reformers and Martyrs, Cranmer and Ridley and Hooper, have declared, "is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors?"

But let us see what is the faith of your own Church—not what Dr. Bangs says, nor what any individual among your number may say, nor how you manage to explain difficulties, but what is the faith of your Church, as explained in your *Book of Discipline*. Do you not profess to believe in "diverse orders"—more than two certainly, and not less than *three*? Is not this the faith of that prayer which you have taken from our Prayer Book, and incorporated in your services of ordination? What is the title to those services? "The form and manner of making and ordaining of Bishops, Elders and Deacons." In the Episcopal service here, the three orders of the ministry are expressed, and why is it not so in yours? Would not a plain man so understand it? But then comes the first service for "the ordination of Deacons," taken from the "Ordination of Deacons" in the Episcopal Church. Your Bishop, laying his hands upon the candidate's head, says, as with us, "Take thou authority to execute the office of a Deacon in the Church of God,

in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." You observe here, that the expression is not in the *Methodist Church*, but, "in the Church of God."* And surely it will not be denied that the individual has *professedly* been admitted to one order in the Christian Ministry.

Then comes the "Form and manner of ordaining Elders," and this is likewise taken from the Form in the Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church. The Bishop, with the Elders, laying his hands upon the person's head, says, "The Lord pour upon thee the Holy Ghost for the office and work of an Elder *in the Church of God, now committed unto thee, by the imposition of our hands,* and be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God and of his holy sacraments, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Surely it will not be pretended that this is the same order of the Ministry to which the individual had been exalted before, when he was made a Deacon; for evidently it is another ordination and one by which he has received a different name and ampler powers.

But now comes the "Form of ordaining a Bishop," and this too, we find, has been taken from the Form in the Episcopal Church. The address at the laying on of hands is precisely the same—"Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Bishop *in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen;* and remember that thou stir up the grace of God which is given thee by *this* imposition of our hands, for God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and love and soberness." The intelligent reader will observe that there is this difference between the "Form for the ordination of Elders" and that "for the ordination of Bishops," both in the Methodist and Episcopal services. When the Elder is ordained, no authority is given to him to ordain others, nor is any thing said

* Dr. Bangs pretends, that the act of ordination or consecration only gives the individual authority to exercise his office, "in that particular branch of the Church of Christ in which he thinks himself called to labor as a Gospel Minister." Page 248.

about "the laying on of hands." But in the Form for the ordination of Bishops in both services this question is asked, "Will you be faithful in ordaining, sending or laying hands upon others?" Now then I ask, can it be pretended after all, that this *third* ordination, so separate and distinct from either of the others, and conferring powers not conferred by either of the others, is still nothing more than that of Elders—that the individual has really been exalted to no higher authority, than that which he possessed before? Can it be pretended that this is not as much a *third* order of the ministry as the Elder is a *second* and the Deacon a *first*? Would not the same arguments which destroy the distinctive character of Bishop, also destroy the distinctive character of Elder and of Deacon? Nay, by the same process of reasoning, could it not be shown, that neither of these acts of ordaining confer any power at all, and therefore that every order of the ministry, is a mere nullity, an idle ceremony, a solemn mockery, and altogether unnecessary to make a man a minister in the Church of God? Here lies the very gist of the controversy between the Methodists and Episcopalian. We deny the power and authority of *self constituted* Teachers. We say that you pretend to have the three orders of the ministry as held by us—that you have the distinct forms of ordination as set forth in our Prayer Book—that you allow none to ordain but Bishops, and yet that in direct violation of the spirit of your ordination vows and prayers, as there recorded, you are obliged to acknowledge, that Mr. Wesley, by whom your first Bishop was ordained, was nothing more than a Presbyter or Elder; that his ordination, was the same with that by which Presbyters are now ordained in the Episcopal Church,—that no authority whatever was given to him to ordain others, and consequently, that your pretended Episcopacy cannot be sustained, and that you ought to acknowledge yourselves Presbyterians, in this respect, as you are. We think too, that the use of such a service and such prayers, without intending what they mean or believing what they say, is a most dangerous practice, and one against which we feel most solemnly bound to lift up our warning voice, in notes of tenderness and love,—and we beseech you,

therefore, to reflect upon the consequences, should they rise up in judgment to condemn you. Thus to exhort and warn our brethren, when we honestly think them to be in danger, is both our privilege and our duty.

But how are these arguments met? these warnings parried? Why, Dr. Bangs, and Mr. Steele after him, I understand, are driven to the necessity of denying that ordination is necessary to a valid exercise of the ministerial office—denying that the Methodists do profess to believe in three orders—endeavoring to show that because the names of Bishop and Presbyter are interchangeably used, therefore the office is the same—declaring that your third ordination is in fact no ordination at all, but only a setting apart of the individual to a special work, in which he had authority before to be engaged, and then inventing a kind of metaphysical distinction between “*order*” and “*office*,” as if Bishops and Elders were the same order though a different office.

Now let your people read the Tract No. 5, and they will find such proofs of the three orders in the Christian Ministry, as cannot be overthrown; as address themselves in a calm and dispassionate manner, to sensible men; as make no appeals to the passions or prejudices of any individuals; as impute no corrupt motives to any denomination of people, and if they are really *Episcopal*, if they believe their own most solemn prayers and services, and are willing to abide by the faith developed in their “Book of Discipline,” then instead of calling on me to deny the doctrines of the Tract, they will rather thank me for its introduction.

This is strange indeed! That because at my request the Bookseller procured a few copies of Tract No. 5 on the Christian Ministry, the Methodist brethren should be aggrieved—that their Minister should call on me to deny its doctrines, and yet, after all, upon examination it is found, that the Tract contains nothing more than the faith of the Methodist Episc. Church as set forth in their formularies of devotion! Why Sir, are you so determined to destroy the Episcopal Church, that you are willing to do it even at the expense of your own desolation? Is this the spirit of the Gospel? Does this comport with a hearty love for the truth? If

you really have the three orders of the Christian Ministry, as in your Book of Discipline you profess to have, then the Tract is in your favor. But if conscience tells you that you have not these three orders—that Mr. Wesley had no right to ordain Dr. Coke a Bishop, (both being Presbyters,) then the Tract is against you. Dr. Bangs says a great deal about “dilemmas,” and here is one, upon either horn of which, you are permitted to hang.

Now I come to Tract No. 4, and the doctrines of this Tract too, you call upon me to deny, *as the doctrines of the Episcopal Church*. Why, my good sir, have you read the Tract? If you have, you must certainly have perceived that it nowhere, *even professes*, to contain the doctrines of the Episcopal Church. According to your own acknowledgment it has neither the name of author, printer or publisher, and the very title shows (“*Methodism as held by Wesley*”) that its design is, to show the opinions and doctrines of Mr. Wesley. Now I should be prettily set to work, to deny the doctrines of Mr. Wesley. Then indeed I might expect severer treatment, than any I have yet received. But if you will point me to any extract which cannot be found in Mr. Wesley, then I will make it known to the public in almost any way that you may desire, and what is fairer still, as those extracts are taken partly from two of Mr. Wesley’s sermons, I will engage to read both of them entire to my congregation, provided you will do the same to yours. I refer to Sermons 109 and 139, and this I acknowledge to be a *challenge* indeed.

But let us examine some of the doctrines of the Tract. It teaches us that the Methodists were originally “zealous members of the Church of England, not only tenacious of all her doctrines so far as they knew them, but of all her discipline, “even to the minutest circumstance.” And is not this the truth, as given by Mr. Wesley himself? Certainly it is, for I have read it, in his “Short History of Methodism,” and much more to the same purpose.

This doctrine, therefore, cannot be denied, and when I consider the place where they originated, (Oxford,) together with the great object which they professed to have in view, I cannot but regard it as remarkable, that another movement of a similar na-

ture should again commence there, under circumstances so strikingly the same. God grant that the Oxford Tractarians as they are called, may be enabled to adhere to their present purpose of remaining firm to the doctrine and discipline of the Church "even to the minutest circumstance." Although they may now be opposed even as the Wesleys were, and names of reproach may be given to them, still I most ardently hope that no opposition may be successful, in driving *them*, from the sound principles of the Church.

But another doctrine of the Tract is, that Mr. Wesley warned his followers not to separate from the Church; and is not this doctrine true? When the question came up, "are we not unawares, by little and little, sliding into a separation from the Church" did he not say, "O, use every means to prevent this: exhort all our people to keep close to the Church and sacrament. Warn them also against despising the prayers of the Church—against calling our Society the Church—against calling our preachers Ministers." And speaking of the Church and denying that the Methodists were dissenters, did he not say "we do not, we dare not separate from it. We are not seceders nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The seceders laid the very foundation of their work in judging and condemning others; we laid the foundation of our work in judging and condemning ourselves. They begin every where in showing their hearers how fallen the Church and Ministers are; we begin every where in showing our hearers how fallen they themselves are. What they do in America or what their minutes say on this subject is nothing to us, we will keep to the good old way." That this is the doctrine of Mr. Wesley, I cannot deny, for I have just copied it from an edition of his works published at your own "Conference Office."

But another doctrine of the Tract is, that Mr. Wesley did not appoint his preachers to administer the sacraments—that he made a great distinction between the right to preach, and the authority to administer the sacraments, and that he declared that those who did presume to administer the sacraments "renounced the first

principle of Methodism, which was wholly and solely to preach the Gospel." Can this doctrine be denied? Surely not, for it is the whole object of the sermon 139 to unfold and explain it.

How plainly did he address the preachers, those whom he regarded as commissioned to call sinners to repentance. "It does by no means follow from hence that ye are commissioned to baptize or to administer the Lord's Supper. Ye never dreamed of this for ten or twenty years after ye began to preach. Ye did not then like Korah, Dathan and Abiram "seek the priesthood also." Ye knew no man taketh this honor to himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron. O, contain yourselves within your own bounds, be content with preaching the Gospel."

How prophetically did he forewarn them of the temptations which they would meet with. "Ye yourselves were at first called in the Church of England, and though ye have and will have a thousand temptations to leave it, and set up for yourselves, regard them not; be Church of England men still. Do not cast away the peculiar glory which God has put upon you and frustrate the design of Providence, the very end for which God raised you up." And this sermon was preached in 1789—five years after the time when it is pretended that Mr. Wesley appointed the Bishops for America; and such a reference is made, in the sermon, to the Methodists in America, as to show that Mr. Wesley knew how to make a just and reasonable distinction, between the Church of England, considered in all those essential features which constitute a true and living branch of the Church Catholic, and the Church of England as connected with the state, which in itself is an accidental circumstance, and which her best friends most deeply and sincerely regret.

But to remove all cavil or doubt as to Mr. Wesley's reference, to show that when he declared against separation he did not refer to the Church of England as connected with the State, but to the Church of England as a branch of the Church Catholic or universal—the one body established by our Saviour,—we point you to his remarks in relation to the great reformation, where he acknowledges that the "grand stumbling block of all, in the way of the

sincere members of the Church of Rome, was their open and avowed separation (the open and avowed separation of Luther and Calvin) from the Church." In this respect you are aware that the Reformation in England was distinguished from that on the Continent—the English reformers always protested against separation—their simple object was to *reform*, not to *destroy*—to retain every thing sound, scriptural and apostolic, and to remove only the corruptions, and hence they affirmed that "the Church was no more a different Church because of the Reformation, than a man is a different man because he has washed his face." This is the distinction to which Mr. Wesley refers, and then he goes on to speak of different separations from the Reformed Church of England. Of the Baptists he says, that their "warm dispute was concerning one of the external ordinances, and as their opinion hereof totally differed from all the other members of the Church of England, so they soon openly declared their separation from it." Then speaking of the Presbyterians and Independents he remarks, that "they also spent a great part of their time and strength concerning the circumstantialis of religion, and for the sake of these, separated from the Church;" and with these he contrasts the character of the Methodists, and shows in what manner the latter differed from the former. "They avowedly separated from the Church; we utterly disavow any such design. They severally and almost continually inveighed against the doctrines and discipline of the Church they left; we approve both the doctrines and discipline of our Church."

Now that these are the doctrines of Mr. Wesley, I cannot deny, nor can I see how it is possible for any one to doubt the fact, who is at all acquainted with his writings. So far as the Episcopal Church is concerned, all I have to say is, that she has never affirmed or denied, to my knowledge, any thing which Mr. Wesley wrote, and certainly she has never authorised me to do so. Indeed, I cannot see why you might not as well call upon some minister among the "Methodist Protestants" to deny these doctrines, as to call upon me, for it is well known that one ground of their separation from you, is your manifest departures from Mr. Wesley.

However, if you would like to know my opinion of the Tract, this I am ready to give you. Whilst I think it contains a faithful account of Mr. Wesley's doctrines, at the same time, I am of the opinion, that it speaks too highly of Mr. Wesley himself, and that one might conclude from reading the Tract, that Mr. Wesley never departed in his conduct from the sentiments which he so often and so strongly asserted. This I know, is the opinion of many, and that Mr. Wesley himself always persisted in declaring that he had never separated from the Church. But to my mind it is perfectly plain that he acted inconsistently with his principles,—and this is the opinion of those who knew him best.

Hence his brother Samuel early wrote to his mother, declaring, that "*they* (the Methodists) *design a separation*," and in the same letter, speaking of their rules in relation to men and women sitting apart, (which, by the way, are still retained in your Book of Discipline, though I believe you do not adhere to them,) and to the band societies, he says—"Their societies are sufficient to dissolve all other societies but their own. Will any man of common sense or spirit suffer any domestic to be in a bond, engaged to relate every thing without reserve, to five or ten people, that concerns the person's conscience, how much soever it may concern the family? Ought any married persons to be there, unless husband and wife be there together? This is literally putting asunder whom God hath joined together. As I told Jack, I am not afraid that the Church should excommunicate him, (discipline is at too low an ebb,) but that he should excommunicate the Church. It is pretty near."

So in the following correspondence between John and Charles : the latter you will observe, really understood that his brother had acted inconsistently with his avowed and well known sentiments. These Letters were written as late as 1785, about one year after the supposed ordination of Dr. Coke. In the reply of Mr. Charles Wesley, reference is made to the American Revolution as a "causeless and unprovoked rebellion."—and this, no doubt, was intended as a home thrust at his brother, who had written against the Revolution and declared it a "*Rebellion*."

"PLYMOUTH, August 19, 1785.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I will tell you my thoughts with all simplicity, and wait for better information. If you agree with me, well: if not, we can (as Mr. Whitefield used to say) agree to disagree.

For these forty years I have been in doubt concerning that question, "What obedience is due to the *Bishops?*" Obedience I always paid to them, in obedience to the laws of the land. It is in obedience to those laws that I have never exercised in England those powers which I believe God has given me. But this in no wise interferes with my *remaining in the Church of England, from which I have no more desire to separate than I had fifty years ago. I still attend all the ordinances of the Church at all opportunities; and I constantly and earnestly advise all that are connected with me so to do.*

All those *my* reasons against a separation from the Church I subscribe to still. What, then, are you frightened at? I no more separate from it now than I did in the year 1788. I submit still to its *governors*. I do, indeed, vary from them in some points of doctrine, and some of discipline, by preaching abroad, for instance, by praying extempore, and by forming societies. I walk by the same rule I have done for between forty and fifty years. I do nothing rashly! It is not likely I should. The high day of my blood is over. If you will go on hand in hand with me, do. But do not hinder me if you will not help. Perhaps if you had kept close to me I might have done better. However, with or without help, I creep on. And as I have been hitherto, so I trust I shall always be, your affectionate friend and brother.

J. WESLEY."

The reader will observe the strange acknowledgement of his *doubt* in relation to "the obedience due to the Bishops," and this, too, a year after it is said that he had actually decided the matter, and was fully persuaded that "Bishops and Presbyters are the same order." But to the reply of his brother.

"MARYBONE, September 8, 1785.

"DEAR BROTHER—*I will tell you my thoughts with the same simplicity.* There is no danger of our quarrelling; for the second blow makes the quarrel: and you are the last man upon earth whom I should wish to quarrel with.

"I don't understand what 'obedience to the Bishops' you dread. They have left us alone, and left us to act just as we pleased, for these fifty years. At present, some of them are quite friendly toward us, (particularly toward you.) The churches are open to you; and never could there be less pretence for a separation.

"You write 'All those reasons against a separation from the Church I subscribe to still. What, then, are you frightened at? I no more separate from it than I did in the year 1785. I submit still to its *governors*. I do, indeed,

vary from them, by * * * preaching abroad, by praying extempore, and by forming societies,' (might you not add, *and* by ordaining?) 'I walk by the same rule I have done for between forty and fifty years. I do nothing rashly!'

"If I could prove your actual separation, I would not; neither wish to see it proved by any other. But do you not allow that the Doctor has separated? Do you not know and approve of his avowed design and resolution to get all the Methodists of the three kingdoms into a distinct, compact body, a new Methodist Episcopal Church of his own? Have you seen his ordination sermon. Is the 'high day of' his 'blood over?' Does he 'do nothing rashly?' Have you not made yourself the author of all *his* actions? I need not remind you, *Qui facit per alium facit per se.*

I must not leave unanswered your surprising question, 'What, then, are you frightened at?' At the Doctor's rashness, and your supporting him in his ambitious pursuits—at an approaching schism—as causeless and unprovoked as the American Rebellion—at your eternal disgrace, and at all those evils which your reasons describe.

"'If you will go on hand in hand, do.' I do go on in the old way, in which we set out together, and trust to continue in it till I finish my course.

"'Perhaps if you had kept close to me, I might have done better.' When you took that fatal step, at Bristol, (ordaining,) I kept as close to you as close could be; for I was all the time at your elbow. You might certainly 'have done better,' if you had taken me into your council.

"I thank you for your intention to remain my friend. Herein my heart is as your heart. Whom God hath joined, let no man put asunder. We have taken each other, for better, for worse, till death do us—part? No; but eternally unite. Therefore, in the love which never faileth, I am your affectionate friend and brother.

C. WESLEY."

In a letter to Dr. Chandler written only a short time before the above correspondence, Mr. Charles Wesley said, "I can scarcely yet believe, that in his eighty second year, my brother, my old intimate friend and companion should have assumed the Episcopal character, ordained Elders, consecrated a Bishop, and sent him to ordain the Lay-preachers in America. I was then in Bristol at his elbow, *yet he never gave me the least hint of his intention.* How was he surprised into so rash an action?"

"Lord Mansfield told me last year that *ordination was separation.* This my brother does not and will not see; or that he has *renounced the principles and practices of his whole life;* that he has acted contrary to all his declarations, protestations and writings; robbed his friends of their boasting; realized the nag's

head ordination; and left an indellible blot on his name as long as it shall be remembered."

These letters should be read in connection with Dr. Coke's letter to Mr. Wesley, desiring ordination from him because he wished his "influence in America," and telling him it could be done "*in Mr. C's house in his chamber:*" also Dr. Coke's letter to Bishop White, in which he acknowledges that he had exceeded the authority given him by Mr. Wesley—that Mr. W. disapproved of his proceedings, and in which he certainly manifested a desire of becoming a *real* Bishop: and also Dr. Coke's letter to Mr. Wm. Wilberforce as late as 1813, in which the same desire is expressed for the Episcopate in India. But I fear that I have already exhausted your patience, and as the *whole* subject of Methodist Episcopacy may come up in my next,

I subscribe myself

Very respectfully, &c.

JAMES A. BOLLES.

P. S. There are several things in your Letter to which I should be glad to reply, such as "*unchurching others*," *claiming to be the only primitive, Apostolic Church*," "*the Church of the United States*," "*bigoted exclusiveness*," &c., but perhaps it may be time enough for me to pay my respects to you on these points, when you have declared the works from which these sentiments are derived, or where it is that such "*lordly claims*," as you call them, are any where asserted.

BATAVIA, Oct. 7, 1842.

To the Rev. ALLEN STEELE:—

Dear Sir—Since the forwarding of my last letter, I have had some fear lest my omission to notice a few passages in yours, should be construed into an intentional disrespect, and therefore I have concluded to send you another by way of supplement. At the same time, too, as this correspondence may be protracted to a considerable length, it has seemed to me not improper to hasten the consideration of some of the topics which must necessarily pass under review.

You object to the reading of Dr. Chapman's sermons in my Church, "than which," you say, "none, perhaps, are more exclusive or denunciatory."

In the latter part of the summer, long after the circulation of your Books and Tracts, I gave notice, that for the purpose of instructing my own people, and especially the younger members of my congregation, in the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Church, I should hold a meeting in the Lecture Room on Sunday evenings. In accordance with this notice no efforts were made to induce the attendance of other people—the time, place and manner of conducting the services were all of the most quiet, peaceable and unobtrusive nature, and nothing could surprise me more than to learn, that the exercise of this plain duty and right, on my part, and in a way so unexceptionable even to the most censorious, should have given you offence. What must we conclude but that the subject of Episcopacy is a sore one to you, and one which you are scarcely willing that the people should understand, as it is explained by Episcopalians themselves?

But is it really true, that the Sermons of Dr. Chapman are open to the objections which you make—that they breath a spirit so "*exclusive and denunciatory*"? So far from it, that they are universally regarded by all who are acquainted with them, as models of Christian kindness and courtesy.

There is but one of the sermons, however, which relates particularly to Methodism, and only a part of that (a few pages) is taken up with the examination of Methodist Episcopacy, and in

order to avoid even the appearance of making any attack upon you, this sermon was passed over, so that in no way *publicly* or *privately*, can you say, that I had given you any just provocation for the course which you have seen proper to pursue. True it is, that I was sorry to pass over the sermon referred to, for in all my reading I have never seen a fairer illustration of that divinely charitable spirit, in which all theological controversies should be conducted. Though some might fail to be convinced by the arguments, yet no one, I am sure, could be otherwise than charmed and captivated by the spirit. For instance, when he comes to allude to the subject of Methodism, the author commences in this way:

“And here I am compelled by a sense of duty, to speak of a separation from the original Church of a somewhat different character, although the difference is evidently nominal, rather than real.

“We have amongst us a denomination, respectable for their numbers and distinguished for the warm fervor of their religion, who, while they reject in terms the ministry of Presbyters, do but conform in terms to that of Bishops. I need not name them. They trace their history to the year seventeen hundred and twenty-nine, and had their origin in the partial secession of a pious and talented Presbyter of the Church of England from the pale of her communion.”

With this introduction, in which there is nothing exclusive or denunciatory, the author then goes on to state a few of the facts in relation to Methodist *Episcopacy*, and to prove the spurious character of its pretensions, and then he concludes the argument with this declaration:—“*Presbyterian ordination it undoubtedly has, but Episcopal it has not.* And believe me, brethren, I regret the circumstance. It is no gratification to me that its *episcopacy* is manifestly spurious; nor do I take any pleasure in stating these things, except as matters of fact open to the inspection of all, and the legitimate subjects of fair, dispassionate inquiry. In this we are tolerated by the laws of the land, and God forbid that it should be otherwise; God forbid that we should not speak the truth upon a concern so grave and so solemn, either from an apprehension of

the consequences or because the truth may give offence. I have learnt a very different lesson from our Saviour Christ. When speaking ‘to those Jews which believed on him,’ he said, ‘if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the *truth* and the truth shall make you free.’ I have learnt indeed, that Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him, never hesitated, on all suitable occasions, to discourse freely and unreservedly upon all the errors, whether of faith or practice, by which his hearers were liable to be seduced; and I breath no wish for higher authority to exculpate me for presenting the fullest information upon the subject I have undertaken to discuss. Abuse is one thing, but argument is another. Misstatements are to be severely reprehended, but important facts are worthy of all acceptance. To pretend that they are sometimes of such a nature that they cannot be conveyed in the spirit of meekness and humility, of charity and brotherly kindness, is altogether idle and extravagant. Can you not reprove the vices of the sinner without hating his person? Can you not denounce an heretical doctrine without inveighing against the heresiarch who maintains it? Then are there no real graces of Christianity to soften the heart, to animate the soul, and give utterance to the lips which should keep knowledge.”

Although this extract is long, and is abundantly sufficient to exculpate the author from the charges of “exclusiveness and denunciation,” yet the conclusion of the sermon is so excellent that I cannot help extracting it as not *undeserving* of *our* imitation in the work in which we are at present engaged.

“For myself I will yield to none in the tolerant feelings I delight to indulge. Towards the wise and good of all denominations, my bosom expands with the liveliest fraternal affection and sympathy. I rejoice in the well founded belief that they are Christians, such Christians as adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour, upon earth, and as will hereafter enjoy his blissful presence in heaven. I can, with truth, give the right hand of fellowship to all the saints of the Most High God, let their scriptural

views upon some points be ever so variant, and their ministry and worship ever so adverse to my conceptions of the Primitive Church and the beauty of its holiness. I can pray for them and breathe with them the same prayer to heaven. I can sit down with them before the same table of the Lord, and call him to remembrance with thankfulness as the blessed author of our common salvation. I can this day, with the utmost cordiality, minister to them the emblematic flesh and blood of our redemption. Through life I can make allowance for their imperfections as I wish them to make allowance for mine. I can give honor where honor, praise where praise, is due. And when my last hour is come, I am sure that it will prove no diminution of my happiness to be conscious that I can only hope to enter the mansions of glory in company with myriads on myriads of my fellow Christians of a different persuasion, over whom will be pronounced the approving sentence, "Well done, ye good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.

"Nevertheless I must, while here below, contend, most earnestly contend, for the faith of Christ. It matters not to me to what it relates, whether to internal graces or to external order; it is all holy, it is all divine, and it is all imperative. You have no right to say of one Gospel truth, that it is immaterial, or of one Gospel institution, that it is either indifferent or superfluous; that it may be acceded to or resisted at pleasure. Hence I can never reconcile it to my conscience to be so tender of the mere opinions of men, as to lay my hand upon my mouth, and my mouth in the dust, rather than controvert a favorite prejudice or expose myself to an injurious reproach. But while I live, I will endeavor through good report and through evil report, to serve the Lord with fear, and of him only will I be afraid. While I live, although it will be impossible to renounce or even to modify the truths this day delivered, I will not be inflamed by the fires of a persecuting spirit; I will not suffer this fiend of hell to rankle in my heart; I will not cease to remember that, "now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity." And still, in defence of the true Church, the true Zion and

Jerusalem so often and so unjustly assailed, will I neither hold my peace nor rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Now, my dear Sir, after this long extract from the Sermons of Dr. Chapman, and from the only Sermon in the whole volume which relates directly to Methodism, our readers can judge for themselves of its "exclusive and denunciatory spirit"; and if I mistake not, they will be apt to think with myself, that you could scarcely have read the Book when you were pleased to speak of it in the manner recorded in your letter.

But more than this. To the excellency of the Sermons I have the testimony of an individual who was once a distinguished member of your own body, and who, from his peculiar situation as a Layman and a man of undoubted talents and piety, is well calculated to act as umpire between us. I refer to John Esten Cooke, M. D., Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic in the Transylvania University. Under God, the Sermons of Dr. Chapman were the means of leading his reflections to the important subjects discussed in them, and the account which he has himself given, is in the following words:—

"Soon after that time," (after the interest which he had taken in the establishment of a Methodist paper,) "a volume of Sermons by the Rev. Dr. Chapman, for which I had subscribed, was brought home, and for some days no attention was paid to it. At a leisure moment, curiosity led me to look into it, when I found the manner and style so striking, and the subject so new to me, that I determined to read the Book. I had heard that the Church denied the validity of Presbyterian ordination, but had never thought it worth while to enquire into a claim, at first sight, apparently so extravagant. I was determined to see what could be said in support of such pretensions. I read carefully the first seven sermons, by which I was most forcibly struck. *The language, chaste—the style, perspicuous*—I was carried along without labor, and comprehended without the slightest effort. The manner of handling the subject was *strikingly modest* and as *charitable as any man could reasonably desire*. Supporting the doctrine of the invalidi-

ty of ordination by Presbyters, and the validity of Episcopal ordination alone, the author proceeds in maintaining the argument without uncharitable reflections, and when he condemns, does it in the mildest language, and often or always with expressions of good opinion of the motives of the opposite party. If there is any thing offensive to any one, in the book, it is a quotation—and quotations a man is bound to state as they are stated by the author from whom they are taken. The strength of the direct argument for the doctrine and of that indirect one growing out of the evil consequence of schism, or division from the Church, contained in some of the following sermons, is such, that I was compelled to say to myself, if these facts are so, this doctrine is the truth.

"Uneasiness now sprung up in my mind. The question arose, What if it be true? Can you leave your friends, your intimate associates in what has engaged so much of your intention, your efforts, your ardent desires for eighteen years, and go to a people who—prejudice whispered—are no people? The answer of conscience was, if it be the truth, embrace it, and leave the consequences to him who revealed his will to man for his guidance. The question now was, is this doctrine true? To determine this without delay, I sought information from ministers of the principal denominations involved in the doubt, as to the validity of Presbyterian ordination, viz:—the Presbyterians, the Methodists and Baptists. With one consent they all referred me to *Miller's letters on this subject*. This book I immediately obtained. Emory and Bangs were also mentioned, and were likewise obtained. Meeting Dr. Chapman in the street, I enquired of him also, what were the standard works on this controversy. He also mentioned *Miller* and stated that Bowden had answered him. He also mentioned Lord King, (by whom Wesley was influenced,) and *Slater's original draft in answer to King*, as well as *Potter*, on Church government, and Hooker's works.

I immediately commenced reading *Miller* with great attention—read, over and over, the arguments respecting the order of the Church in the time of the Apostles and for centuries afterwards, with his quotations from such of the Fathers as could be procured

conveniently, and with regard to those which I had not, I was enabled to form a very good idea from comparing him with Bowden. Thus, if he quoted a passage from an author which I had not the means of consulting, Bowden was examined to see what reply was made; if admitted by him it could not be questioned; if not admitted, Miller's reply to Bowden's answer was examined, and if necessary, Bowden's rejoinder to Miller's reply. So that from the two works of each, it was not a difficult matter, with care, to make out what was agreed to by both these able disputants, and what was *asserted*, but when answered, not *maintained* in the reply, and therefore given up; in short, it was not difficult to get at the truth. The result of the whole investigation, after six weeks close inquiry, was a thorough conviction of the truth of the doctrine that Presbyterian ordination is unauthorized by Scripture, and therefore entirely invalid."

Such is the statement given by Dr. Cooke, and I hope, therefore, that no misrepresentations in relation to the Sermons of Dr. Chapman, will so prejudice the serious enquirer after truth, as to prevent an examination of them. Indeed, I cannot look upon the "hue and cry" which has recently been raised throughout the country against the Episcopal Church, denouncing her as "Popish, exclusive, intolerant, bigoted," and almost every thing else which the imagination can invent, to alarm the community, and which has its origin in the fact that so many are becoming tired of the evils of schism and are returning into the bosom of the Church,—I cannot but look upon this "hue and cry" as a cunning artifice to prevent the people from making a serious and sober examination into the matter—a kind of attempt to convince the world, that the claims of the Church are really too absurd and ridiculous to merit the serious attention of sensible men. Now, all we ask is, that people will follow the example of Dr. Cooke; that they will read and examine for themselves; that they will investigate the whole subject calmly and prayerfully; that they will not be satisfied with any popular harangues addressed to the lowest passions of our nature; that they will not allow any senseless clamours to drown the voice of reason and religion, but that

in the fear of God, they will honestly and soberly enquire "*whether these things be so.*"

But I pass on to the consideration of some other topics suggested by your letter.

You will readily grant, that it is a common maxim of justice, admitted in every treatise on ethical science, and explained by Dr. Barnes in his commentary on the passage referred to in my last, that *no individual is responsible for the inferences which others might draw from his doctrines.* This, I say, is a common maxim of justice, admitted in every treatise on ethical science, and one against which a man cannot sin without violating in letter or in spirit the *ninth commandment* of his Maker. But what is here true as to individuals, is true, also, as to bodies of men. We have no right to charge upon the latter any inferences of our own, or to misrepresent the real doctrines which they teach.

Suppose, now, that you apply this rule to the doctrines of the Episcopal Church. In the Apostle's and Nicene creeds—creeds which have come down from the purest days of Christianity—she declares her faith "*in one Catholic and Apostolic Church;*" and in the preface to the ordination service, she speaks of the Ministry as an essential part of the Church, and declares, "that from the Apostle's times there have been these three orders of Ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests and Deacons," and that she cannot allow any to minister at her altars who have not received Episcopal ordination. This is the faith of the Church, and upon this faith she has ever acted. But at the same time, in the declaration of this faith she pronounces no *direct sentence* of condemnation against any who may happen to differ from her in judgment—she consigns no individuals or sects to pains or penalties, *merely because they do not receive her testimony in this particular*, but allowing them the privilege of thinking and acting for themselves, she claims the same equal and undoubted privilege of thinking and acting for herself; and this right of holding the faith, in a pure conscience, she thinks she ought to be permitted to enjoy in kindness and in charity.

But suppose, that instead of allowing this privilege to her, you

assert that her principles are subversive of those which are held by every other denomination of Christians; that they are popish and tyrannical; that they *unchurch* all other sects and consign them over to the *uncovenanted mercies* of God; that you will, therefore, enter an eternal protest against her lordly claims; that you will break every link in her Apostolic succession, and this fancied superiority she shall not be permitted to enjoy. True it is, that she has as much right to believe in three orders as others have in two or in one; that in this respect she but conforms to every well regulated society under heaven, because that in none are the officers all upon the same level;—true it is, that she has as much right to believe in a succession of Bishops as others have in a succession of Presbyters, (for all really believe in a succession,); true it is, that she has no where avowed the intention of “unchurching others or consigning them over to the uncovenanted mercies of God”—this is not her language, but the *inferences* which others have drawn from her doctrines; still, notwithstanding all this, her claims are “exclusive, bigoted, uncharitable, and deserving the execration of the community.”

Now I ask you, my friend, is this the dictate of christian love? Is this the kindness of brethren in Christ? Is this the way to convince us of our error or our sin? Nay, more, is it morally honest to charge the Church with doing that which she has never done, excepting by inference, and when that inference is one which you yourself, or others for you, have drawn from her doctrines?

Let us consider the expression—to “*unchurch*” and “*consign people over to the uncovenanted mercies of God*.” There is something frightful about it, and weak nerves are apt to lift up their hands in holy horror whenever it is pronounced. But what does it mean? where does it occur? In our prayers? in our articles? in any of our authorized expositions of truth? No Sir; but within a period comparatively recent, it has originated and been handed down, and is now become stereotyped for the use of all who desire to excite a prejudice against the Church. But what does it mean? That the Episcopal Church has undertaken to excom-

municate the good christian people of all other denominations,—to cast them out of the Church of Christ and of the promises of his covenants? This, undoubtedly, is the meaning which it is intended to convey, and yet, so far is this from being true, that the great desire of her soul is rather to *church* than to *unchurch* them, and her voice of invitation is ever lifted up, urging them to come to her communion. But perhaps I shall be told that it means nothing more than this—that in the opinion of Episcopali-ans, the good christian people of other denominations do not real-ly belong to the Church of Christ, and consequently that they have no claim or title to the covenant promises of membership! Well, suppose that it does mean this, and that this is really our opinion. Have we not a right to this opinion? and if we honest-ly entertain it, is it not our duty to say so? Can it be that we have not the right to speak what we honestly believe to be the truth, even in love? Although your people may be “good peo-ple,” much better and wiser than we pretend to be ourselves, still no one will presume to say that you are infallible, nor that possibly some error may not cleave to you; and therefore, if we are honestly persuaded that you are in error, is it not both our duty and our privilege to tell you so, provided only, that we never transgress the bounds of christian meekness and love?—that we never employ the language of intemperate zeal and abuse? Can you justly be angry with us because we tell you what we honest-ly believe to be the truth? Is this any reason why you should regard us as your enemy? We are perfectly willing that you should combat this opinion; that you should endeavor to satisfy your own consciences and to convince us of our mistake, and we do not object to the proper manifestation, on your part, of energy and zeal. But we do deny your right to abuse, or to misrep-resent us, or to heap upon us the language of invective and reproach. You may tell us that our opinions are *exclusive*—to this, we do not object; for, we think we can prove to you that they are not; we think that we can prove to you that *sectarianism* is more exclusive than *catholicism*. But when you go farther than this and call us names of reproach, and stigmatze us as “lordly,”

"bigoted," "popish," "tyrannical," then we lift up our hands and tell you to beware, and remind you of the words of Christ, "judge not, that ye be not judged, condemn not, that ye be not condemned."

But suppose that our opinions *are* "exclusive." Does it necessarily follow that they are *unchristian* or *untrue*? By no means. The christian religion is exclusive, for it excludes all other religions, but it is not, therefore, untrue. The doctrine of one only living and true God is exclusive, for it excludes all other gods; and yet, who will pretend that it is therefore unchristian or untrue? The declaration that there is but "one name under heaven whereby any man can be saved," is exclusive, for it excludes every other name and every other mode of salvation, and yet, how unjust would be the inference that it is therefore unchristian or untrue. Indeed, there is one sense in which all the doctrines of Christianity are exclusive, for they exclude the opposite errors; and may we not, therefore, reasonably argue, that the very exclusiveness of the doctrine of "one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church" is rather an evidence of its truth than of its falsehood.

Although in one sense, therefore, all the doctrines of christianity are *exclusive*, still, in another and a more important sense they are *inclusive*, for they include *all truth*, and *truth* alone can ultimately produce the greatest good to the greatest number. The grand question to be considered, therefore, in reference to any of these doctrines is, not whether they are "exclusive," but whether they are true.

But you must allow me to say, that the Episcopal Church has never, even expressed, the opinion, that the christian people of other denominations are not members of the Church of Christ; much less can it be shown that she has ever "unchurched others and consigned them over to the uncovenanted mercies of God." She prays for "all who profess and call themselves Christians, that they may hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace and in righteousness of life." She invites all who have "truly and earnestly repented of their sins, are in love and charity with their neighbors, and intend to lead a new life," to come

to her communion. At the same time she declares to all, as the *voice of the Universal Church at all times and in every place*, and from the beginning, that Baptism is the outward act by which alone we can be admitted to the membership of Christ's kingdom, and that the right of administering baptism belongs to that ministry which Christ has established, which has never been destroyed, and which, in her opinion, consists of the three orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. This is her solemn testimony and firm belief. But at the same time she steps not out of her own rank to praise or censure others. She utters no uncharitable sentence of condemnation against any. She is contented with the plain and simple declaration and manifestation of the truth. Not, of course, that the Church has no opinion in relation to the practice of others, nor that her opinions never come in conflict with others, for truth must ever come in conflict with error; but that she never pronounces the *uncharitable* sentence of condemnation against any. And when, therefore, an attempt is made to excite against us the indignation of the community in consequence of this pretended ground of defence, we cannot but feel, in the sorrow of our heart, that truth has been violated, and that the cause of Christ has been deeply wounded in the very house of his friends.

We are conscious, however, that much of this misrepresentation arises from ignorance. People do not understand the Church. They read little or nothing in her defence or in explanation of her doctrines and services. Every thing that is said by the *Romanists* on the one hand and by the ultra *Protestants* on the other, is greedily seized upon, and christian Ministers, taking their arguments from some controversial work, without ever examining the opposite side, reiterate in their pulpits the most preposterous statements; and all this we would not presume to deny, with perfect sincerity, and simply, because they are really ignorant of the question at issue and of the facts in the case.

This is the apology which we make. We impute no corrupt motives to any; we charge them not with *intentional* misrepresentation; but we trust in God, that the time is not far distant

when the *people* will examine for themselves, and when *both sides* of the controversy shall be well understood.

In the mean time, we feel no alarm for the Church, for we believe that she is founded upon a Rock; that she does not depend upon human arguments or earthly power; and we are verily persuaded, that those who are fighting against her, are really fighting against God, though they themselves may be ignorant of it.

You speak in your letter of "*self-styled successors of the Apostles*," and of their "*lordly claims*," as though there was something arrogant and preposterous in the claim of Apostolic succession. But suppose, now, that I should retort this language, (which God forbid,) do you think that you are entirely invulnerable? Do you not know that there are but two ways by which an individual may be commissioned by Christ to act in his behalf and as his ambassador? That he must either derive his commission *directly* and *immediately*, as St. Paul did, or else he must derive it *indirectly* and *mediately*, as Timothy and Titus did, by the ordination of men having authority? And which, I ask you, is the more arrogant and preposterous and lordly claim—to claim the extraordinary and direct commission after the manner of St. Paul, and with none of the miraculous qualifications of St. Paul to sustain the claim, or to claim the commission in that ordinary and common mode which the Saviour has established in his Church? Which is the more arrogant and lordly? But I will not press the question, and therefore turn from it to another.

What is meant by the Apostolic succession? Did not the Saviour commission the Apostles? Did not they commission others? Did not St. Paul say to Timothy, "the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also?" And is not this commission of the ministerial office from one to another, from the time of the Saviour to the present—is not this a *succession* in the ministry—an *Apostolic succession*? And does not this succession constitute one of the strongest arguments—a standing miracle, I had almost said—for the facts of Gospel History? And, so far, is it not a fulfilment of the Savior's promise, given to

the Apostles, " Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world?"

But more than this; is this *doctrine* of succession peculiar to the Episcopal Church? Surely not, for it is maintained by all sound divines of every persuasion. What said the Westminster Assembly of Presbyterians? "The receiving of our ordination from Christ and his Apostles and the Primitive Churches, and all along through the apostate Church of Rome, is so far from nullifying our Ministry or disparaging of it, that it is a great strengthening of it, when it shall appear to all the world that our Ministry is derived from Christ and his Apostles, by *succession* of a Ministry continued in the Church for sixteen hundred years, and that we have *a lineal succession from the Apostles.*" What said the late distinguished Dr. Lathrop, a Congregational or Presbyterian Minister of New England? Not long before his death he published two sermons entitled "Christ's warning to the Churches to beware of false prophets, &c." The object of the sermons was to warn the Churches against encroachments of self-constituted teachers, and he proves that the only way in which they can be preserved from them, is by the doctrine of the necessity of *an external commission, derived by regular uninterrupted succession.* This is his language. "Many centuries, it will be said, have elapsed since Christ commissioned his Apostles, and since they ordained their successors; and how can we know that the succession has continued without interruption?" In answer to this objection the author says, "We have the express promise of Christ that he will support his Church and be with his Ministers 'always, even to the end of the world.' When we compare this promise with the institution of the ministry and the mode of introduction which immediately followed, we think it can import no less than that a regular ministry should never cease in the Church, nor any necessity occur for departing from the instituted manner of introduction. We have the *institution, the promise and the Apostolic practice,* and what more do we need? The promise so emphatically expressed, and so clearly interpreted, by subsequent

usage, must, we think, be understood as we have stated it. It is, then, by no means necessary that by *historical deduction* we should prove an uninterrupted succession; we have a right to presume it until evidence appears to the contrary. If any say that the succession has failed, *the burden of proof must lie wholly on them*. Let them from incontestible history show us the time, place and manner in which it terminated; who were the last Ministers in the line from the Apostles; who in the new line; who the Layman that ordained them; and where was the scene of transaction. Until we have this information we rely on the promise of Christ, in the sense in which we understand it.” Such was the remarkable confession of this great man, whose intellectual vision enabled him to foresee the disastrous effects which were likely to arise, from the strange doctrine, that every individual, who thinks or feels that he ought to preach, has a right to do so. No wonder, when this inward feeling or impulse is made the *only* test of qualification, that the Church of Christ should be rent by every kind of heresy and schism. Thus I might go on and show, by concession of the soundest divines of almost every persuasion, that the doctrine of the Apostolical succession is by no means peculiar to the Episcopal Church.

But do you not believe in some kind of succession yourself? Why, then, the effort which Dr. Bangs has made, (and whose example, I understand, you have followed,) to prove that Bishops and Presbyters are the same order? Did you not think that if you could prove this, then you would convince your hearers, that Mr. Wesley, who was a Presbyter, had a right to ordain Dr. Coke—a right which belonged to him in virtue of his office, which he had received from others, and they from others, and so on through the corrupt Church of Rome up to the very time of the Apostles themselves? If this was not your object—if, in your opinion, any individual who chooses may administer the sacraments and preach the Gospel—then it can make no difference whether Mr. Wesley was a Bishop, a Presbyter, a Deacon or a Layman; and no effort was necessary, on your part, to establish his right to ordain by virtue of his office. But more than this, I find that, in an ancient

copy of your minutes, (1789,) the question is asked, "Who are the persons that exercise the Episcopal office in the Methodist Church in Europe and America?" And then the answer given, is this, "John Wesley, Thomas Coke, and Francis Asbury, by *regular order and succession.*" (Who did John Wesley succeed in the Episcopal office?) Really, my good friend, I hope that after this, you will be more cautious as to the manner in which you attempt to ridicule the Apostolic succession.

The subject is one of great importance and solemnity, and when understood and *practised*, is the only safeguard of the Church against the assaults of self-constituted Teachers. The Laity are especially concerned in maintaining it, for it alone can relieve their minds from doubt as to the question, whether they really have the sacraments or not.

But again, in your letter, speaking directly of me, you say, that "efforts have been made again and again to prejudice this community against Methodism"—"efforts which you could but look upon as jesuitical, wanton, unauthorized and inconsistent with the charities of the Gospel, and without a parallel in your experience." These are heavy accusations, and should not be made without the most substantial reasons, and therefore, in the present stage of our discussion I shall not attempt any *direct* reply. You have lived in this community little more than a year, and in another year, it is probable, that you will be gone; and if in this short time you have discovered such traits in my character, I can only hope that a longer acquaintance will tend to remove them; and I am content that those who have had this longer acquaintance with me, shall be permitted to judge of the justice of your charges.

But if such efforts have been made, as you pretend, to prejudice the community against Methodism, then they have been made within the last year; and when you remember how long it is that your people have been almost as sheep without a shepherd, you will at least give me the credit of waiting in my efforts, until they were provided both with a Church, and a Pastor whose abilities are said to be superior to those of any other individual in

this section of the country. There is one thing, however, of which you must allow me to remind you ; not that I would accuse you of it, but that I would stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance, and that is, that it is possible to slander an individual, not only by charging him with crimes which he never committed, but by heaping upon his person those injurious names and scandalous epithets which he does not deserve. As in the case of Corah and his company when they accused Moses of being ambitious, unjust and tyrannical ; or in the case of the Pharisees when they called our Lord a blasphemer, a sorcerer, a gluttonous man and a wine bibber ; or in the case of those Jews who charged the Apostles that they were pestilent, turbulent, factious and seditious fellows. All these are instances of manifest calumny, and most humiliating is the reflection that many individuals mistake the use of such language for argument. And this kind of slander may be more injurious than any other, inasmuch as it may fix upon our neighbor a more heavy and irreparable wrong ; for these names include all that the imagination of any individual may choose to invest them with, and being general and indefinite in their nature, specifying neither *time, place or circumstance*, it is, of course, impossible to disprove them. In future, therefore, I propose, that if either of us intend to bring such accusations as you have made above, we shall be very particular in making the *specifications*.

You remark that there are many things in the Church which you admire ; that you have strong attachments to her, &c. Of all this I have no doubt, and did you but know her better, you would admire her more—her doctrines and her services all improve upon acquaintance, and hence we find, that few are willing to leave her who have once been brought within her fold. But others have expressed their admiration more warmly than yourself. You have read the testimony of the late Dr. Adam Clark, one of the most brilliant lights in your spiritual horizon.

"I consider the Church of England," said he, "the purest national Church in the world. I was brought up in its bosom ; I was intended for its ministry ; I have been a Methodist for half a

century; I have been a preacher for forty-three years, and I am greatly deceived, indeed, if I be not without any abatement a thorough member of the Church of England. Its doctrines and sacraments which constitutes the essence of a Church, I hold conscientiously as it holds them. I reverence the Liturgy next to the Bible. I proclaim its doctrines and administer its sacraments, not only in the same spirit in which it holds and administers them, but also in the same words or form. I also reverence its orders and highly esteem its hierarchy" [sacred orders] "and have not a particle of a dissenter in me, though I love and esteem all good men and able ministers wherever I find them. But I preach and have long preached without any kind of Episcopal orders. My family fell into decay, and my education was left imperfect. *I would greatly have preferred the hands of the Bishop*, but not having gone through the regular courses, I could not claim it."

Again, when speaking of the Liturgy, Dr. Clark remarks, "It is almost universally esteemed by the devout and pious of every denomination, and is the greatest effort of the reformation next to the translation of the Scriptures into the English language; a work which all who are acquainted with it, deem superior to every thing of the kind produced either by ancient or modern times, and several of the prayers and services of which were in use from the first ages of Christianity; and many of the best of them before the name of Pope or popery was known in the earth. As a form of devotion it has no equal in any part of the universal Church of God. It is founded on those doctrines which contain the sum and essence of Christianity and speaks the language of the sublimest piety, and of the most refined devotional feeling. Next to the Bible, it is the book of my understanding and my heart."

- Then we have the testimony of Mr. Watson, another distinguished Divine of the Methodist Communion. "Such a Liturgy," said he, "makes the service of God's house appear more like our true business on the Lord's day, and besides the aid which it affords to the most devout and spiritual, a great body of evangelical truth is, by constant use, laid up in the minds of chil-

dren and ignorant people, who when at length they begin to pray under a religious concern are already furnished with suitable, sanctifying, solemn and impressive petitions. Persons well acquainted with the Liturgy are certainly in a state of important preparation for the labors of a preacher; and their piety often takes a richer and more sober character from that circumstance." How does this extract from Mr. Watson rebuke the spirit of those who represent the services of the Church as cold and formal, and destructive to the cultivation of vital religion.

But what said the great Robert Hall, the distinguished Baptist divine? Speaking of the Liturgy, he said, "I believe that the evangelical purity of its sentiments, the chastened fervor of its devotion and the majestic simplicity of its language have combined to place it in the very first rank of uninspired compositions." How strange, with such testimonies in its favor, that so many "who profess and call themselves christians," should refuse to unite in the devotions of the Liturgy and should presume to imagine that *they* are too good, as it were, to lift up their voices in its solemn petitions!

What said the well known Thomas Scott, the Commentator? "I am a Minister of the Church of England, and I hope to continue so, as I prefer her Liturgy, her discipline and her doctrine to that of any other Society of Christians in the Universe." You observe here, that it was not because the Church of England was connected with the state, that he preferred it, but because it possesses those important things which Dr. Clark says "constitute the essence of a Church."

What said Dr. Doddridge of the Liturgy? "The language is so plain as to be level to the capacities of the meanest, and yet the sense is so noble as to raise the conceptions of the greatest."

What said Alexander Knox? "I cannot doubt that in the fullness of time the Prayer Book will be accounted the richest treasure, next to the canonical Scriptures, in the Christian Church."

What said the divines of the Synod of Dort—the celebrated council of Dutch Reformed Clergymen, assembled in 1619? "We have a great honor for the good order and discipline of the Church of

England, and heartily wish we could establish ourselves upon this model."

All these testimonies in favor of the Church you will find collected in "Dorr's Manual," and in "Odenheimer's Offering to Churchmen;" and surely we have reason not only to regard them in some instances, as important concessions, but as reluctant acknowledgments of the superior advantages of the Episcopal Church; for in all that "constitutes the essence of a Church," the Episcopal Church in this country is the same with the Church of England, and only differs from her in that which has nothing to do with the "essence of a church," and which is really an injury to the latter. O, how it grieves one's heart, to hear *young converts* who have but just entered upon the duty of prayer, uttering language of ridicule and contempt for the hallowed supplications of the Liturgy, and presuming to question the piety of those christians, who love to breathe the fervent spirit of its devotions! How pitiful do the books and tracts of Dr. Bangs appear, when placed in contrast with the noble sentiments of Clark, and Hall, and Doddridge!

Sincerely hoping that the remarks which I have now made may find a favorable reception, and be considered calmly, and without prejudice,

I subscribe myself,

Very Respectfully, &c. &c.

JAMES A. BOLLES.

October 17, 1842.

To the Rev. ALLEN STEELE:—

Dear Sir:—As it is now about three weeks since my second communication was sent to you, I hope you will not think me too impatient, if I express my anxiety for a reply, provided you intend to send me one.

Of course I would not think of urging you to any thing like *haste*, but having already prepared and delivered a series of Lectures, I suppose that you can, without much trouble, so arrange the arguments as to enable me to proceed in their consideration.

Will you be so kind as to inform me by the bearer whether any reply is to be expected by me, and when it will probably be sent.

Very Respectfully, &c.

JAMES A. BOLLES.

BATAVIA, October 17, 1842.

Rev. J. A. BOLLES:—

Dear Sir:—Your communication to which you refer, was received just as I was leaving for Yates county, and since my return, having to remove my family to another part of the village, I have not had a moments leisure to answer it. During the present week I think I shall be able to reply to such portions of it as are relevant.

As to the arrangement of arguments so as to enable you to proceed, you must explain what you mean. I am not aware of what you refer to.

Yours, Respectfully,
ALLEN STEELE.

BATAVIA, October 18, 1842.

REV. MR. BOLLES:—

Dear Sir:—My apology for this delay in replying to yours of Sept. 19th, I trust was satisfactory. I have improved the first leisure hour in answering it, though I know of no *special* object to be gained by any haste in this matter—yet as from some cause you seem to be impatient, I have sought to remove that impatience at my earliest convenience.

A large portion of your lengthy epistle refers to subjects which I cannot consent to discuss in this random, and, as I consider, useless way. I suppose you are a conscientious Episcopalian. This I do not doubt, nor am I so vain as to entertain the thought that any thing that I could say would induce you to change your views of what I call *high churchism*. On the other hand, though I readily admit your ability to present the argument on your side in its strongest form, yet, as I examined that ground while pursuing my Theological studies with a member of your Church, I cannot think that any effort of this kind would result in my conversion to the *exclusive* and *high-toned* claim now advanced by your leading periodicals. Hence I know of no good that would result from a *private* discussion of the peculiarities of *our* or *your* church. So far as *wrong* exists between you and myself, it is proper that explanations should be made when called for, and if possible, the wrong righted. And this may be perhaps satisfactorily done by private correspondence, and thus far I am willing, in the character of a *private* correspondent, to travel with you, but not beyond it, without first settling a number of preliminary questions. Judging from your letter, I should think that in your estimation, even this effort at explanation was increasing, instead of narrowing, the cause of the offence, especially if the number of the items named, or the quantity of paper used, are to be taken into the account. And if a similar explanation of differences on Church government and order would lead to similar results, it should most certainly be avoided as a thing to be deprecated. You have certainly spared neither time nor material to give me most wholesome advice on the importance of *self-government*, and

if I still persist in recklessness, it will not be the sin of ignorance. I trust, however, I shall prove myself a teachable son in the Gospel, even though I may be looked upon as *illegitimate*. After such lessons upon brotherly love and ministerial kindness, and bible morality, from a regular successionist, you will not think it strange if I express my surprise that in the same document I find the author of these good instructions giving most abundant evidence of being guilty of the same offence. But it is one of the frailties of human nature to complain most of those traits in others, which are most prominent in ourselves. Let us look at a few items of beautiful harmony between the Ministers teachings and the Ministers practice, as furnished by the same letter, and the more so, because example is said to be better than precept.

You complain of my applying to you "hard names and epithets," and speak most affectingly of your sorrowful emotions that I should so far forget myself as to be guilty of so great an offence. Now without permitting my imagination to conjure up mere spectres, so horrifying to your feelings, I shall confine myself to the record, and present a few of the beautiful specimens your letter contains "of Christian kindness and truth." In great kindness, in the midst of your essay on brotherly love, I am most affectionately charged with possessing neither love for the truth, nor the spirit of the Gospel—of calling you Beelzebub, and persecuting one who lives Godly in Christ Jesus—of having caused you to be charged with falling into the horrible pit of Romanism and Infidelity—undeserving of public sympathy and support—that I have produced heart-burnings, bickerings, evil speaking, false reports, etc.—that I have violated the scriptural rule of brotherly intercourse—been reckless of the common obligations of morality, more so than men of the world—that I have been guilty of deceit—of exaggerating and torturing the truth—of *slander* and *falsehood*. Such are a few of the *mild* and very *soft* epithets that spice your essay on christian kindness. And Doctors in Divinity and Leaders in the Church come in for an equal share of your brotherly affection.

With such discrepancies between precept and example, per-

mit me, while I express my regret that I should have been the occasion of your great sorrow for having, in a moment of excitement, as you allege, so far forgotten myself as to use hard epithets to recommend to you that very wholesome adage, "Pysician, heal thyself." And while your benovolent heart weeps over the faults of others, forget not to exercise that godly sorrow for yourself which worketh repentance not to be repented of.

My sayings might have been *hard*, but nothing is harder to errorists than truth, and if better men have had these same charges urged against their principles, it is only evidence that the exclusive nature of these principles, in themselves disconnected from all extraneous circumstances, are a provocation of no ordinary magnitude, for better men than myself have urged them. Hard epithets! What, High Churchmen talk of hard epithets applied to them by the Methodists! And of whom did they learn these epithets? What harder ones were ever applied to your Church by Mother Rome than you have applied to us, from Wesley down to the present day. The early history of Methodism would give you beautiful specimens of epithets applied copiously by the sanction of your Ministers, in the shape of brick-bats and eggs, when the arguments to prove that we were not orthodox "were Apostolic blows and knocks." True, that in Tract No. 4 these hard epithets have softened down into an intimation that we are an *ignorant, fanatical* set of enthusiasts, with a few aspiring leaders who, waiting until Wesley was out of the way, went to work and organized *something* which they called a Church; but that we are not a Church—have no ministry, no sacraments, no divine warrant—but are living in a state of sin against God, and advises the christian, the man of the world, the Methodist himself, as they would avoid hell and secure heaven to keep clear of Methodism. (How kind, how affectionate.) And in Tract No. 5, it is softened down to the charge of having "no authorized ministry, no sacrament, no covenant, no church, and being out of the covenant we are out of the promise, out of God's mercy and favor, and have no pledge, no assurance of salvation, and in the conclusion are most graciously consigned over to those on whom

the wrath of God now abideth. What splended specimens of the spirit recommended by Paul in the 13th chap. of I. Cor. And if you wish any further specimens almost any number of your Churchman will supply you. What else than policy has produced even this change in the kind of weapons used. Surely we have had *substantial* proofs of your kindness. And here, perhaps, I may as well notice what you say of the *substantial* proofs your people have given of friendship. I conclude you refer to the contributions of the members of your Church for the erection of St. John's Church. Suppose you make out the bill as credit and enter per contra the amount St. James Church has received from Methodists for the last twelve years, and on which side, do you think, the balance would be struck? A little arithmetic sometimes is beneficial in settling difficulties, and it may be beneficial here in giving stability to your *substantial* proofs. But should it be found in your favor, I do not suppose you will contend that so small an amount purchased the right of sending us *silently* to perdition; certainly in receiving your contributions we understood no such contract, and if it is urged, shall demur, and chose to refund the balance.

You complain that I have violated the scriptural rule, "If thy brother trespass," etc., and that if I feel injured by your circulating the tracts or in any other matter, that it was my duty to have introduced the subject to you, etc. Let us see how the Minister has practiced on this principle of Bible equity. Surely one belonging to the true Church should not complain of a schismatic, for a departure which he practices himself. But to the proof. You labor to make out that the attack was all on our part, and that you circulated the tracts and resorted to other means merely in self-defence. If this was true, why did you not obey the scriptural rule "If thy brother," ect., and yet, though I have been with you certainly as frequent as you have with me, "you never deigned to introduce the matter to me." Thou that teachest the law, dost thou transgress the law? Now if what you attempt to prove is true, that I was first in the offence, then are you guilty, by your own exposition of scripture, of violating the scriptural rule of

brotherly conduct, and if I am not first in the offence then you concede your main ground of complaint. As you are fond of dilemmas here is one on either horn of which you may take your choice to hang.

You complain of my speaking evil of an absent brother without sufficient or, indeed, any cause. And what treatment have absent brethren received from this teacher of brotherly kindness? What kind of language, in your attempt to make out a cause of my evil speaking, have you used in the same document, in reference to absent brethren? Why, that Drs. Peck and Bangs, men whose moral characters are as pure and whose intellectual strength is equal to Bishop De Lancy's, the testimony of the former is *unworthy of confidence*, and the latter is guilty of *falsehood*! Where in the report of the "Leader's Meeting," or any of my sayings of absent brethren, will you find so wanton an attack upon christian character? But I am sick of such stuff, and will pursue this point no further, especially as these specimens will show you the importance of being a little cautious. And although you may think it assuming for a schismatic, a mere pretender, to council one in "regular orders," yet I would seriously recommend a self application of the wholesome advice you have so freely given to your neighbor.

In regard to your explanations, I readily grant you have shown both *tack* and *talent*, and furnished evidence that you are not an undisciplined disputant—that you can manage a *bad cause* to the best advantage. By your dwelling on matters irrelevant, you evidently labor to divert attention from the point in issue, and show more of the character of a special pleader than in my mind is consistant with private correspondence of Ministers. Surely there is no need of reviewing the history of the whole Church to show which of us is guilty in the matter between us. What has the publication of articles in the Christian Advocate and Journal in 1836, to do with the matter now in controversy? Do your people take that paper? if not, they could not be injured by them, and if they do, if they were so effectually reviewed in the Churchman, (your paper,) and that by a Methodist Minister, and if the

articles were so grossly abusive and destitute of argument as you assert, surely the antidote was more than sufficient, without the aid of Tracts No. 4 & 5, in 1842. These articles you would have us think, were very powerful things, and yet, in another part of your letter you speak of them, in book form, as worthless, and that if they had not the name of their author they would have no influence; but in the Advocate they were published without his name,—put this and that together.

1836 you fix as the date of the Methodist attack upon your Church. Were I disposed to go into an investigation of this point, I might show you some beautiful specimens of Christian kindness and truth in your periodicals, in reference to our Church, bearing a much earlier date, and which have all the characteristics "of party slang," though your Church never takes a part in "party controversy," for she is on the rock (I thought it was Christ's Church and not the Protestant Episcopal Church) and fears not her security. I wonder what you call *your* Church—what constitutes it, and by what kind of logic you would justify "party slang and party controversy" on the part of her ministry in defending her, when she would not be justifiable in it herself. These are some of the mysteries which mere pretenders do not understand.

What has our matter to do with Dr. Bangs' works? If you feel yourself competent to join issue with him in reference to his erroneous statements, I presume he will not decline the engagement, and perhaps you might find that he is as well acquainted with the history and canons of your Church as some of your Ministers. At all events, I think you will find it easier to *call* his statements *hard* than to *prove* them *false*. You charge me, indeed, of circulating a copy of his work, and so far it may be relevant to the case in hand, and this is the only ground of complaint that you have given as the cause of your action against us, that is relevant. Let us examine this point carefully, for if you fail here, you must exonerate me from the charge of commencing the war, and admit that we have acted on the defensive. You charge me with commencing this difficulty by circulating among

your people books such as never before had appeared in this village, containing the grossest mistakes in relation to the doctrine of your Church. Had you obeyed that rule of scripture you so much admire, and come to me, you might have learned your mistake. I never circulated such books in this or any other village. I never circulated copies, or a copy, of Dr. Bangs' work on an "Original Church of Christ," to any *members* or *member* of your Church. It is true, a member of my congregation, not of *your* Church, at his own special request and upon the profession of *his* being an honest inquirer in reference to our organization, did obtain for his own use, a loan of the only copy of that work I ever owned. Was this a crime? And yet this is all of the offence.

And now let us see with what grace you talk of the foment produced among our members by your circulating Tract No. 4. On your discovering in the house of a member of *my congregation* the book complained of, was there no excitement manifested. Did you not put a copy of Tract No. 4. into his hands, so, if possible, to counteract the influence of Dr. Bangs' arguments, or was you first in furnishing him with such instruction? In either case who was doing the work of a peaceable Pastor? But there is more in this fact in which you hinge the whole of your efforts against us. With the circumstances of the case you were made acquainted, and the gentleman told you himself, how he obtained the book on his own special request, and assured you that I had acted only the part of a christian friend in lending it to him, for which he was grateful. And yet, with a knowledge of these facts, *you* and your people, silent as you say they have been, have published it from one end of the village to the other, that I commenced this war by circulating among *your people* books of the most abusive character. Never was there a greater slander or a more positive falsehood uttered, and by what rule of brotherly kindness have you given currency to this *known falsehood*? You possessed a knowledge of the facts at the time you gave it currency, and can christian charity say that you did not *intend* to slander me? You designed, at least, to shelter yourself at the expense of — (not to use hard epithets) a brothers character, and

yet, in all your intercourse with me "you never deigned to explain it to me." As you are fond of references, permit me here to refer you to the ninth item in the Decalogue, as containing wholesome advice.

I will not stop to notice the hundred-and-one stories that you people have put into the mouth of Madam Rumor, "That the sainted wisdom of the Methodist Episcopal Church is employed in furnishing me with sermons to preach down St. James' Church, and that this was the object in sending me here, etc. etc. Now, certainly, this can exist only in fancy, for the members of your Church have possessed themselves in peace—they never stoop to party slang—it is these ranting Methodist that do all the harm on both sides, and are accountable, for all the evils that grow out of party excitement. So taught the Pharisees in the days of the Apostles, and thus has exclusiveness and intolerance ever taught.

There are some other items in connection with the origin of this attack, which would carry it back earlier than the date of the book's leaving my library, and which would show that other reasons might account for its origin than those given in your letter. "The haste of a few to build up a church," would show that the benevolence of the Rev. J. A. Bolles manifested in his liberal donation for the erection of St. John's Church, was indebted to a very peculiar principle. I trust it will not be necessary to mention them, nor should I have adverted to them but for the singular course you have taken in your letter. I will only say on this point, that those who live in glass houses should be cautious how they throw stones, for with what measure you meet it shall be meted to you again. Let not him that girdeth on the harness boast himself as he that taketh it off.

You mistake my meaning altogether in reference to the doctrine of the Tracts. Nothing is intimated by me of what forms a large portion of your letter. You affirm that Tract No. 5 contains nothing more than the faith of the Methodist E. Church. This is strange, indeed! Why, then, did the author withhold his name, from fear of the storm that the Methodists would raise against him, if his name was out, as you intimate? Do the Meth-

dists so much dread to have their doctrines published? Your apology for this nameless author is worthy of a Knightship, and reminds me of the French Revolution, when the watchword of a certain class was, "Strike, but conceal the hand"—a method of warfare very convenient to the assailant under certain circumstances, and when the attack is of a certain character, which I will not name, lest you should charge me with using hard epithets. Does the Methodist Episcopal Church believe that Bishops are, by divine right, an order superior to, distinct from, and have powers, authority, and rites incompatible with Presbyters, simply as Presbyters—that the Bishops of this order are the sole successors of the Apostles as ordainers of other Ministers and governors, both of Pastors and people—that this succession is a personal succession, viz., that it is to be traced through an historical series of persons validly ordained as Bishops, transmitting in an unbroken line this Episcopal order and power to the latest generation—that no Ministry is valid except it have this Episcopal ordination, and that all ordinances and sacraments are vain except they be administered by such Episcopally ordained Ministry? No, we deny every one of these positions, and yet this is the doctrine of Tract No. 5—the doctrine of Bishop Taylor, of the Oxford Tract men—but not the doctrine of many eminent men, both in the Church of England, and her *defective representative* in the United States—not the doctrine of our Church, a tyro might know. I wished to know if it was *your* doctrine, the doctrine of your Church *generally*. You affirm that Tract No. 4 contains, not the doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, but merely the doctrine of Mr. Wesley. This is begging the question. The Tract assumes that Methodism is not a Church—that it is without Sacraments, without a Ministry, its members living in sin against God—that the fellowship you have for us should be the same you have for Abolition and Moral Reform Societies, and proposes to prove it by Mr. Wesley as the witness. Whether the author made out the case or not is immaterial—the question is, what is the doctrine, the claim set up by the author of the Tract. This I have just stated. Is this the doctrine of your Church,

was what I asked—is this *your* opinion of us—is this the *fellowship* you have for us, the same you have for those honorable associations you give us? Certainly there is nothing abstruse here, nothing difficult to apprehend—but perhaps a direct answer would not be convenient. It was against such claims that I entered my protest as being *unchristian, exclusive, and intolerant*. And if these doctrines are admitted as being the doctrines of the Protestant Episcopal Church—this fellowship, the fellowship for us, my protest *stands* against it, and we shall know how to understand and appreciate this talk of friendship to us. Such doctrines I would oppose in all proper ways, as I would oppose *Popery*. In regard to what you say of the members of our Church, and the motives of their action in the “Leaders’ Meeting,” I would recommend you to obey that scriptural rule, and converse with them. You will probably learn that they had more light on the subject than you imagine. Equally irrelevant are many other things that you have introduced. The whole matter may easily be settled by laying aside evasions and special pleadings, and answering a few plain questions. Let me propose a few which you will answer at your leisure:

1. Will you affirm that Bishop De Lancey has had no agency in introducing Tract No. 4, into Western New York.
2. That you never circulated said Tract, until you knew of my circulating Bangs’ work, and that to counteract its influence was the cause of your first circulating it.
3. That you never sought to prevent persons from uniting with our Church, by attempting to show them that our ordination was not valid.
4. That the reading of Dr. Chapman’s Sermons to the public was not as much a defence of the government and order of your Church—not as much an attack upon other Churches, as a similar course of Lectures which you yourself might prepare and deliver would be.

These questions answered in the affirmative by you will remove the necessity of our defence, so far as that necessity was founded on your supposed attack on our Church and polity. And

so far as the argument referred to that, it shall be publicly retracted. But I do not suppose that you will deny me the privilege of presenting to my people my views of Church government, and the evidence of our being a true Church. This I had intended to do in my course of sermons on Christian Theology, in its proper place, and without supposing that by doing it I was giving you cause of complaint. I do not complain of your having read Dr. Chapman's sermons—this you had a right to do. But I do complain of *injustice*, in your publishing to this community that I commenced an offensive war upon your Church, and that without provocation. This you know to be *false*, and you know that repeated public efforts were made by you to prejudice this community against Methodism before any public notice was taken of them. And then, in my discourses on the subject I have aimed, not at men, but at doctrine. I have sought to explode what I conceived to be erroneous in those tracts, not in the wake of Dr. Bangs, as you would insinuate, nor by declaring that I would sunder every chain in your succession. I made no such pretensions. I am not so vain as to tell my audience beforehand what I shall do. I sometimes tell what I shall attempt to do, and sometimes enquire if I have done it. If your reporter has missed my statements in other matters as much as in these specimens you have given, I fear you will be farther from the truth than you imagine the "Leader's Meeting" to be. In no one of my discourses did I make any allusion to you, or to any thing that you had done; all your ground of complaint, therefore, lies in the notice from the "Leader's Meeting," and if that is incorrect, I am willing to correct it. But we have more evidence of its being correct than that to which you allude. You speak of my having the field all to myself, etc. etc., and wish me to communicate my argument to you, etc. The first, certainly, is most profound; a great privilege, indeed, that I have my own pulpit to myself and a right to invite the people to come and hear me. Have you not the same privilege? Have you not had the field to yourself, and for these six months poured forth upon the public mind the peculiarities of your Church? and who has complained of that? This

you had a right to do. I hold myself accountable to you for my public administrations in my pulpit no farther than your *name* is concerned, and if this has been used improperly the remedy is at hand, and when I am convinced of the fact, shall be promptly applied. It is sufficient to reply to your modest request for my arguments, that the discourses were publicly announced, and all who were disposed could have heard for themselves.

Hoping that if you write me again, you will be so definite as not to leave room for the play of my imagination to conjure up such dreadful spectres—

I remain, Yours, &c.

ALLEN STEELE.

BATAVIA, Oct. 27, 1842.

To the Rev. A. STEELE:—

Dear Sir—Your epistle of the 18th inst. I will endeavor to review in as brief a space as possible, and shall proceed in my next to the investigation of the claims of Methodist Episcopacy, as intimated at the close of my second letter. You say that “by dwelling on matters irrelevant, you undoubtedly labor to divert attention from the point *in issue*.” Let us see.

The first point *at issue*, was, that Bishop De Lancey had “introduced anonymous pamphlets, attacking the character and regulations of the Methodist E. Church,” and this charge you publicly read from your pulpit. Now, was it not relevant in me to show, that Bishop De Lancey had done no such thing—that your own Leaders had placed the Tract No. 4, on Methodism, in the Bookstore—that even allowing the statement of Dr. Peck in all its length and breadth, it did not sustain you in the allegation, and that one of the very individuals who penned the accusation, was informed that subsequently to the appearance of the Tracts in this village, the Bishop had remarked (~~not~~ to me only, but to another individual who gave the information) that he had never seen or read the Tract at all? And now, instead of attempting to answer these facts—instead of *attempting* even to show that you had any grounds whatever for the allegation, you charge me with irrelevancy, and then ask me to “affirm that Bishop De Lancey has had no agency in introducing Tract No. 4 into Western New-York.” After having yourself affirmed publicly, that he *has had such* agency, you now seek for information as to the fact.

But another point at issue was, that I had also *commenced* an attack upon “the character and regulations of the Methodist E. C., by the circulation of the same pamphlet.” In answer to this I replied in substance, that so far from *commencing* such an attack, the whole difficulty was begun and carried on by yourselves; and this I proved, not by my own word merely, but by *facts* and *dates* about which there could be no mistake, and in relation to which it is impossible for any individual to blind our eyes. And how have you answered me upon this point? Why, by acknowl-

edging, virtually, all that I asserted; acknowledging the existence in this village, of the Books and Tracts which I referred to, long before the publication even of the Tract complained of; acknowledging that you did give to the very individual to whom I referred, the Book of Dr. Bangs; acknowledging your ignorance at least, as to the time when that Book was given, by asking me the question as to time, and offering to take my answer and retract your assertion; and now, because some of my people have ventured to say, since the reading of the document of the "Leader's Meeting," that you had commenced the attack, you declare that there "never was a greater slander or more positive falsehood uttered," and you more than intimate that I circulated this "known falsehood," *intentionally* and *designedly* to shield myself at your expense. Really, Sir, there is something in this part of your letter which astonishes me above measure. At the same time you must allow me to say, that there is also something in these wholesale charges so entirely unsustained by the specification of facts, and so utterly repugnant to your own virtual acknowledgements, that I cannot but regard them as ludicrous in the extreme—so ludicrous, indeed, that I could not take offence at them if I would.

True, you say that the individual to whom you gave the Book was a *member* of your congregation, and not of the Episcopal Church. But what are the facts? He has been baptised in the Church—confirmed in the Church—his children have been baptized by me—he has ever regarded himself as a member of the Church, and does now, and since the reading of Bang's Book, has come to the communion. Are we to understand that every individual who occasionally attends your services, or who, to assist you, has purchased a slip, is thereby not only a bona fide Methodist, but that he has utterly renounced all connection with the Church? If so, the good people of the various denominations in this village should beware. Was this Methodism in the time of Wesley?

True, you say you "gave him the Book on his own special request," and that "in doing so you acted only the part of a chris-

tain friend." Very well. So it was with myself; I gave him the tract at his own special request—not because I found your Book at his house, as you intimate, but because he brought it to me in my study, and wished to know whether I had any reply. I did not complain because you gave him the Book, nor did I impeach your motives in so doing, nor should I ever have mentioned the fact had it not been for the complaints which were made, and for the document of your "Leader's Meeting." But when that document was read, charging me with commencing an attack upon you by the circulation of tracts, then, certainly, it was my duty to state the case precisely as it was.

But another point at issue was, that "the Tract was made up of garbled extracts and false statements." To ascertain the truth of this assertion I compared the extracts with Mr. Wesley's works from which they were professedly copied, and ascertained that you were mistaken. I also offered, if you would point me to any extracts not to be found in Mr. Wesley's works, that I would make it known to the public in almost any way that you might desire, and what was fairer still, that I would read to my congregation the entire Sermons from which those extracts were principally taken, provided you would do the same to yours. All this it seemed to me, was relevant; indeed, the only way to get at the facts. And how have you answered me upon this point? Not by bringing forward a single argument to sustain your original assertion—not by pointing out a single extract as garbled, but by suggesting that "my apology for the nameless author, deserves the honor of a Knighthood," (Knighthood, I suppose you mean.)

But another point at issue was this, "Nothing but a distinct denial of the doctrines of the Tracts No. 4 and 5 as being the doctrines of the Episcopal Church, could deter you from this work of justice." Thus called upon to deny the doctrines of the Tracts, and threatened if I did not, what was my reply?

In the first place, in relation to Tract No. 5, I replied, that inasmuch as it contained an argument to prove the three orders of the Christian Ministry as held by the Episcopal Church, it could not be denied by me as to its doctrines—and moreover I went on

to prove that the same are the doctrines of the Methodist Church, not as explained by yourself and Dr. Bangs, but as contained in your formularies of devotion. And how have you answered me upon this point? Not by saying a word in relation to your Book of Discipline—not by bringing forward a single proof from that authorized exposition of your faith, that I had misrepresented your doctrines, but by doing precisely what I said you were in the habit of doing, what Dr. Bangs does, and what I understand you did in your Lectures—denying in the very teeth of your standard, that the doctrines of the Tract are the doctrines of your Church. Although on every occasion of ordination you pray to God and acknowledge in your prayers, that He has “*appointed these divers orders in Christ's Church,*” orders so distinct and separate from each other in authority and rights, yet in controversy you declare your belief that they are not of divine appointment, and thus deny the “*jus divinum*” of your own most solemn prayers.

Then in relation to Tract No. 4, I replied that it did not even *profess* to contain our doctrines, but “Methodism as held by Wesley,” and consequently that I could neither affirm or deny, and for this simple reason, that the Church has never affirmed or denied to my knowledge, any thing that Mr. Wesley ever wrote. And how have you met me upon this point? Not by bringing forward a single word from the Tract to prove that it professes to contain our doctrines—not by attempting even any thing of the kind, but by asserting that my course of argument is a “begging of the question.” What do you mean by a begging of the question? When an individual assumes the very point to be proved, and then reasons upon it and asks questions about it as though it were proved, this is a begging of the question, “*a petitio principii*”, and this is exactly what you have done. You have assumed that the Tract *professes*, at least, to contain our doctrines; you have even gone farther than this and read in your pulpit some parts of the Tract as containing our doctrines, and then reasoned about them and argued against them, and you have called upon me to deny them, and all this without a word of proof connecting the Tract with the doctrines of the Episcopal Church.

But more than this; after having declared in the most positive and peremptory manner that, "no cry of persecution, of ingratitude, or threat of the withdrawal of friendship or money, or all, at this late hour will deter you from this work of justice; nothing but a distinct denial upon my part of the doctrines of the Tracts Nos. 4 & 5, as containing the doctrines of the Episcopal Church"—you now change entirely the points at issue, virtually acknowledging that you are satisfied on these, and you propose certain questions—questions which have really been answered—and you offer not only to *desist*, but to *retract all you have said as founded upon my "supposed attack,"* provided that I will answer these questions in the affirmative. Truly you have forgotten the old maxim, "*fortis cadere, cedere non potest.*"

You must excuse me from entering into any arithmetical calculations with you—the honor of looking upon subscriptions of *money* as the only *substantial* proofs of friendship, I am content you should enjoy alone; for I have been taught to think and am happy in the belief that poverty and friendship are not inseparable, and that the poor man who has not a cent in his pocket, is oftentimes a more genuine friend than the most liberal "millionaire," especially when that liberality is manifested on paper subscriptions.

You must also excuse me from any attempt to defend myself from the charge of having violated the scripture rule, "if thy brother trespass," &c., for I envy not the intellect of that man who is unable to see that the rule had no application to me until after the reading of your "Leaders" document, and that then I did act upon it as my first letter testifies; not, indeed, by going personally to you, but by doing that which amounts to the same thing, by addressing you personally, in the mildest language and the most respectful terms.

Now I come to that which constitutes, in my opinion, the most serious and important part of your letter, and I feel bound to tell you with more than usual plainness, that I do not submit to the accusation of having used towards you any railing language or abusive epithets. In the most solemn manner do I utterly deny

the charge, and I appeal to all my letters and to the common sense of the reader to sustain me in this denial. On this point, Sir, you have not confined yourself to the record. You have not quoted my language at all in its connection. You have made no distinction between the use of abusive epithets and that faithful kind of address which every individual is privileged to make to the heart and conscience of his accuser; and when, as a christian, I would shelter myself from the gathering storm of man's indignation, by those blessed assurances which our Saviour has given to all who regard themselves as sufferers in his cause, then have you unjustly represented me as employing the language, not of the Saviour, but of personal invective.

Tell me not, Sir, when speaking of your mode and manner of reasoning against the Chnrch, I asked the questions, *is this the spirit of the Gospel? does this comport with a hearty love of the truth?*

Tell me not, that I then accused you of "possessing neither love for the truth, nor the spirit of the Gospel," for if I had supposed that you were so entirely destitute of all moral feeling, I should never thus have addressed myself to your conscience, and therefore I now put the questions to you again as founded upon the manner in which you have been pleased to interpret my language, and I ask you seriously to consider them, *is this the spirit of the Gospel? does this comport with a hearty love for the truth?*—tell me not, when speaking of those false reports which Rumor with her hundred tongues, has carried into the surrounding country, and which I remarked, were in some degree attributable to that unfortunate step of yours in the reading of the Leader's document—tell me not that I then brought a personal accusation against you of "falsehood and slander," for at the same time I acknowledged that all had originated in *haste and inconsideration*, and expressly to guard against any supposed impeachment either of *your* motives or the motives of those with whom you acted, I acknowledged not only that you were good men and christians, but that I did not doubt the excellency and sincerity of your character. No, Sir, in the honor of leaving the points at issue,

and attacking the personal character and integrity of your antagonist—in this peculiar honor—you must stand emphatically alone. The palm I yield to you, and most cheerfully confess that in this particular you have gained the victory, and you may be sure that so far as I am concerned, you will be permitted to enjoy its undisturbed possession. All that you have said and all that you can say against my moral and religious character, however gratifying it may be to the passions and prejudices of some, by the grace of God, I am able to bear; but I cannot and will not bear the reproach of having reproached again. And although I have spoken with some degree of energy and zeal, as I felt called upon to do by the tenor of your first letter, still, lest it should be imagined by any one that I have intended to impeach the purity of your motives, I will here declare again, and most sincerely, that this has not been my intention, and that I look upon your character as so connected with the honor of our common Christianity, that I should regret to see its integrity assailed.

But you must not shield yourself from the responsibility of your letters, by saying *now* that they are “*private*,” for a correspondence that relates entirely to matters which you were pleased to publish from your pulpit *mentioning me by name and without my knowledge or consent, cannot be private*. Let us look at the facts. You have read a public document in relation to me, emanating from the Leaders of your Church,—you have founded upon that document a course of Lectures, and thus made me responsible for the opinions and sentiments which you were pleased to combat,—you have received from me a respectful letter, giving you a fair opportunity to explain before taking any public notice of your extraordinary course of action,—you have written to me as you supposed, a most triumphant reply, not confining yourself to the Leader’s document, not entering into any explanation of *that*, excepting by way of *questions* and *inuendoes*, but going into other and graver charges, and opening almost every intervening subject between Methodism and the Oxford Tracts,—you have declared, with an air of defiance, that I could “make any protest to the public that I see proper,” that you are not only “willing to

abide the issue," but that "*you* will not complain of being denied the common privilege of self-defence, as you acknowledge no such power in this land of christian liberty, and no such deprivation of right,"—you have now refused in your last letter, to discuss the subjects opened by yourself, and have thus placed me in a situation by which I am compelled either to publish your letters or to subject myself to the charge of withholding your vindication; and now, after all this, can you pretend that our correspondence is *private*, and that the publication of it would be a violation of the courtesies of gentlemen? Really, Sir, I will not believe that you would thus fetter both my tongue and my pen—I will not believe that this is what you intend when you speak of the "private correspondence of Ministers;" for you must perceive that there is no way or shape in which our correspondence can be regarded as *private*, and that I am absolutely compelled either to submit in silence to all your accusations, or else to make a fearless and honest defence by the publication of our letters.

Our readers will perceive that so far as I am concerned, it was not my intention to confine our correspondence to matters of a personal nature, but that I wished to enter upon a frank and manly discussion of those topics which are really of interest to the community at large. It is for this reason that I have endeavored to be brief in this, and I propose in my next to examine the subject of Methodist Episcopacy.

Yours, &c.

JAMES A. BOLLES.

P. S. There is one thing in your letter to which I feel reluctant to allude, but which, as illustrating your ideas of justice and propriety, I cannot entirely pass over. You make the following enquiries:—"Does the Methodist Episcopal Church believe, *that Bishops are, by divine right, an order superior to, distinct from, and have powers, authority and rites incompatible with Presbyters, simply as Presbyters?*—*That the Bishops of this order are the sole successors of the Apostles as ordainers of other Ministers and governors both of pastors and people?*—*That this succession is a per-*

sonal succession, viz. that it is to be traced through an historical series of persons validly ordained as Bishops, transmitting in an unbroken line this Episcopal order and power to the latest generation?—That no Ministry is valid except it have this Episcopal ordination, and that all ordinances and sacraments are vain except they be administered by such episcopally ordained Ministry?" Now in answer to these questions, I would say, that if the Episcopal Church believes all this, then the Methodist Church *professes* to do the same, for she has received and adopted into her Book of Discipline the same forms of ordination. But the point to which I would call your attention is, that every part of the above, which is placed in italics, you have copied verbatim without any marks of quotation, (with the single exception of the word "*rites*" for "*rights*,") from an English work recently published by a Mr. Powell, and the questions which you have thus put to me are the questions which, according to Mr. Powell, constitute the points of difference between the Oxford Divines and their opponents. You may think that this is all just and fair, but I confess it does not seem so to me.

But more than this. After putting these questions, you then reply—"No, we deny every one of these positions, and yet this is the doctrine of Tract No. 5—the doctrine of Bishop Taylor of the Oxford Tract men." Now, without saying any thing of the fact, that Tract No. 5 is not one of the Oxford Tracts, as it was first published in this country, I would call your attention to the mistake which you have made in relation to Bishop Taylor. Mr. Powell has quoted from one of the Sermons of *Old Jeremy Taylor*, as sustaining the views of the Oxford Tracts, and as he only calls him plain Bishop Taylor, and says nothing about him as the author of "Holy Living and Dying," you seem to have inferred that he is still alive, and is one "of the Oxford Tract men." Should not such a mistake be a lesson of caution?

J. A. B.

THE CLAIMS OF METHODIST EPISCOPACY.

Dear Sir:—No one can be more sensible than I am, of the folly of a controversy between grave and reverend Ministers, arising out of the circulation of so small an affair as Tract No. 4, entitled "Methodism as held by Wesley." That the distribution of a few copies of said Tract, either with or without provocation, should arouse the whole Methodist Church, not only in this place, but in others, and that in consequence of it the reputation and character of individuals should be assailed—all this it seems to me is marvellous indeed.

But at the same time the occasion is one which may well be embraced, for the purpose of examining a subject which should not be allowed to slumber, and which at all times is a fair and legitimate subject for impartial inquiry. I refer to the claims of "Methodist Episcopacy," to which I propose to devote the present letter.

What is Episcopacy? Evidently, it is the having of a Bishop, (an Episcopos) *as an order, distinct from and superior to, Presbyters in the Church of God.* This is the only definition which has ever been received in the Church, which alone distinguishes the Episcopal form of Church Government from the Presbyterian or from any other; and which, as I have already shown, the Methodist Episcopal Church in her Book of Discipline professes to maintain; and thus professing to have the Episcopacy, it is right and proper that her claims should be tested by the well known principles of Episcopals themselves.

But that there may be no mistake as to the real claims of this denomination, I shall here quote a few words from the "Annotations of Messrs. Coke and Asbury," in which they are endeavoring to prove the divine right and institution of Diocesan Episcopacy. They appeal to the case of Timothy as follows:

“Timothy was appointed by St. Paul, Bishop of the Ephesians and Titus was appointed by the same Apostle Bishop of the Cretians, and they were Bishops in the proper Episcopal sense, and they were travelling Bishops. The Episcopal office in all its parts was invested in them.” “Titus, Bishop of Crete was required to ordain Elders, and to set in order the things that were wanting in every city in the Isle of Crete.” “Each of those Churches (Ephesus and Crete) belonged to a great Metropolitan City, to which many other cities, towns and villages, were considered adjoined.” “So the other Bishops (as soon as possible) had each an extensire Diocese, through which they travelled, and over which they superintended,—nor must we omit to observe that each diocese had a College of Elders or Presbyters in which the Bishops presided.”

So they appeal to the Angels of the Seven Churches as “possessing the Episcopal office,” and declare that, “all the Episcopal Churches in the World are conscious of the dignity of the Episcopal office,” and thus go on to vindicate the order as distinct from that of Presbyters and Deacons.) (See p. 7.)

Before the American Revolution, the Methodists in this country never pretended to have an Episcopacy, or any other kind of Ministry authorized to administer the sacraments. Their preachers were all Laymen, and went no farther than simply to preach the Gospel, which Mr. Wesley declared was “the sole and only principle of Methodism.” The members regarded themselves as a religious Society connected with the Church of England, and so connected as to disclaim the name of *Dissenters*; and even now the *Episcopacy* of the Methodists in this country, is entirely repudiated by the Methodists in England; so much so, that when the Canadian Methodists, a few years since, were admitted into union with the English Wesleyans, it was made an express condition, that they should lay down their assumed Episcopal ordination as derived from the American Methodists.)

Hence the question arises, where did the Methodists in this country obtain the Episcopacy? How did they get it? Directly, by the miraculous appearance of the Saviour to their first Bishop, as he appeared to St. Paul? or indirectly, through the instrumentality of men? Not directly, but indirectly; through the instrumentality of John Wesley, by whom, say they, it was conferred upon Thomas Coke, and by him upon Francis Asbury, and thus by “regular order and succession,” down to the present time.

Now, under ordinary circumstances, I should think it sufficient

for me to show, that John Wesley never had the Episcopacy, either directly or indirectly, and consequently that he could never have conferred it upon Thomas Coke. But as I wish to introduce to the notice of the reader, a number of curious and important documents connected with this subject, I shall go further back and endeavor to establish the following proposition, *viz.*—That we have no good and sufficient reason to believe that Mr. John Wesley ever intended to ordain Dr. Coke a Bishop.

This is the proposition which I shall endeavor to establish—not that we have no reason or evidence at all, but that we have no *good* and *sufficient* reason; and this is a point about which I think it will appear that there is considerable doubt.

I. We know from “Myle’s Chronological History of Methodism,” (pp 75 & 76,) that in 1763 a Greek Bishop visited London, whose name was Erasmus, and when “Mr. Wesley had made enquiry concerning the *reality* of his office, and was fully satisfied that he was a *real Bishop*, he then applied to him to ordain Dr. Jones in order to assist him in administering the Lord’s supper,” and the Bishop acceded to his request.

Now, can it be, that a man who was so far from believing that he had any authority even to make a Presbyter, that he applied for that purpose to a travelling Greek Bishop—that a man who considered the hands of a real Bishop *so* essential to a valid ordination to one of the lower offices of the Ministry, that he was willing to dispense with the performance of that office in a language known to the candidate—(for the same history informs us that the Bishop did not understand English nor Dr. Jones Greek) can it be that such a man would afterwards presume, himself, to consecrate a Bishop and confer upon him the power of ordaining others? Really the supposition is incredible, and we must have no ordinary evidence to convince us of the fact.

II. Again we know, that Wesley was an ordained Presbyter of the Church of England, and that as such, any attempt to exercise the rights of the Episcopate would have been a direct violation of his most solemn ordination vows, for in those vows, he had declared his belief in the discipline of that Church, and had

promised at the altar of his God, so to administer the duties of his office "as that Church had received the same," and in *subordination to his Bishop and other chief Ministers.* We know not how it would be possible for any Presbyter of the Church at the present time, more plainly and palpably to violate his sacred obligations, than to presume to exercise the right of ordination—a right not only withheld in the ordination service, but expressly acknowledged in the Discipline of the Church to belong to Bishops alone. And now can it be that such a man as Mr. Wesley—a man who professed to be more alive to his sacred obligations than others, whose "one desire and design was to be a downright Bible Christian," who was called a "Methodist," as he himself informs us, not merely because he was thought to be "righteous over much," but because he "laid too much stress upon the rubrics and canons of the Church,"—who, in his "Reasons against Separation," written at a time when his judgement was mature, declared that "his affection for the Church was as strong as ever," and that "he saw his calling, to live and die in her communion"—can it be that such a man could be persuaded by any influences however artful and strong, to violate the most solemn of all his vows, and throw to the winds the oft repeated and distinctly expressed determinations of his life? I do not ask whether he might not change his opinion and openly renounce his connection with the Church as a man honestly convinced of error, but remaining in it and professing for it the warmest attachment, could he so far forget the common obligations of morality, as to trample upon one of the most sacred promises made at his holy ordination? Really, this is another supposition which we know not how to believe, and therefore do we declare that it will require no ordinary evidence to convince us of the fact.

III. Again, we know that Mr. Wesley, as "the Father and Founder" of the Methodist Society, often exercised the right of sending his preachers to particular fields of labor, and that in doing so, he frequently laid his hands upon them in token of his blessing; and this practice he professed to have derived from Acts xiii, 3, where, it seems, that certain Prophets and Teachers

laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul, previous to their departure for a particular work to which the Holy Ghost had appointed them. This transaction which I may have occasion hereafter to explain, and which Dr. Bangs has most erroneously described as a Presbyter ordination, (a great error as any one may see by reading the two chapters together,)—this transaction Mr. Wesley correctly understood as nothing more than a parting benediction, and hence in his letter to Mr. Truro, (see Watson's Life, p. 256,) he thus speaks upon the subject:

"Paul and Barnabas were separated for the work to which they were called. This was not ordaining them—it was only inducting them to the province for which our Lord had appointed them. For this end the Prophets and Teachers fasted, prayed and laid their hands upon them—a rite which was used, not in ordination only, but in blessing, and on many other occasions."

Hence we argue as Mr. Watson argues, that when Mr. Wesley separated any of his preachers for any particular field of labor, by the imposition of his hands, this was not intended by him nor should it be understood by us, as an *ordination to the Ministry*, and hence, in order to prove the ordination of Dr. Coke, it is necessary that some stronger evidence should be presented than merely the imposition of Mr. Wesley's hands.

IV. Again, we know from Lee's History of Methodism, (p. p. 127—29,), that when the Methodist Society was first organized in this country under Messrs. Coke and Asbury, these gentlemen were not known as Bishops, the title was not assumed, nor was it assumed until about three years after the organization, and then without the knowledge or consent of the Conference. We know, too, that many of the preachers were opposed to the change, and that after considerable debate in the Conference a vote was passed, not approving of the act, but acceding to the request of the Superintendents upon Mr. Asbury's explanation of the term, to allow it to remain. Had Mr. Wesley actually intended to consecrate Dr. Coke a Bishop in the Episcopal sense, could there have been any doubt of the fact at that early day, when all the actors in the scene at Bristol were then alive, and some of whom were present?

V. Again, we know that it was immediately after this as-

sumption on the part of the Superintendents, (1788,) that Mr. Wesley wrote his celebrated letter of rebuke and expostulation to Mr. Asbury:—

John Wesley to Francis Asbury.

"LONDON, September 20th, 1788.

"There is, indeed, a wide difference between the relation wherein you stand to the Americans, and the relation wherein I stand to *all* the Methodists. You are the elder brother of the American Methodists; I am, under God, the father of the whole family. Therefore, I, naturally care for you all, in a manner no other person can do. Therefore, I, in a measure, provide for you all; for the supplies which Dr. Coke provides for you, he could not provide, were it not for me—were it not that I not only permit him to collect, but support him in so doing.

"But in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid both the Doctor and you differ from me. I study to be *little*, you study to be *great*; I *creep*, you *strut* along. I found a *school*, you a *college*. Nay, and call it after your own names! Oh, beware! Do not seek to be something! Let me be nothing, and Christ be all in all.

"One instance of this, your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you suffer yourself to be called a *Bishop*?

"I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call me a *knave*, or a *fool*, a *rascal*, a *scoundrel*, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me a *Bishop*! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let Methodists know their calling better.

"Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart, and let this when I am no more seen, bear witness how sincerely,

"I am your affectionate friend and brother.

JOHN WESLEY.

Dr. Bangs may strive to convince his readers, that Mr. Wesley here referred to nothing more than "the pomp and ceremony which he had so long been accustomed to associate with the name of *Bishop*," and which he feared that Mr. Asbury was endeavoring to imitate; and some persons, perhaps, may be so credulous as to believe this most curious and (were not the subject too serious) laughable interpretation. But reflecting people will be apt to ask some such questions as these—can it be, that after Mr. Wesley had actually conferred the *office*, he became so much alarmed and frightened at the bare mention of the *name*? Can it be that he really believed himself a *Bishop*, with all the authority of a *Bishop*, and able to confer the same office upon others, and yet, that he would sooner permit the world to call him "a knave or a fool, a rascal or a scoundrel" than to give him his own scriptural and proper title? After having conferred the

Episcopate upon his friend, could he then adjure him by every possible solemnity to disown the fact by disclaiming the very name of his office?

But plainly, Mr. Wesley commences his Letter by reminding Mr. Asbury of the difference between them, in relation to *all* the Methodists—one was “the Father of the whole family,” the other was only an “elder brother of the American Methodists”—one “cared for all,” the other for a part; and then having stated the difference between them, as showing that he had a peculiar right to speak and be heard, he commences his reproof and makes it ten fold heavier by the consideration, that if Mr. Wesley, the father and founder, did not presume to consider himself a Bishop, how could one of his sons! how could Mr. Asbury! And how severe the allusion to the Presbyterians! They were not endeavoring to ape the manners of royalty, but they did confound the distinction between Presbyters and Bishops, and called their ministers Bishops. Mr. Asbury had no peculiar affection for them, and hence says Mr. Wesley, “Let the Presbyterians do as they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better.”

What trifling with our common sense for an individual to tell us that Mr. Wesley only referred to the *name*, and this in consequence of its pompous associations! Had not Mr. Wesley been to this country and did he not know the trials and privations which at that early season a Scriptural and Apostolic Bishop would have to endure? Did he not know of many self-denying and devoted Bishops—martyrs and confessors of his own beloved Church—and had not the name been hallowed in Scripture and by the Spirit of the Living God? No, Mr. Wesley could never have objected merely to the *name*—it was the assumption of the *office*, the presuming to be that which Mr. Wesley never had seriously intended, and which we have reason to believe brought down his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. After all this it will require no ordinary evidence to convince the impartial enquirer that Mr. Wesley ever consecrated Dr. Coke a Bishop.

VI. But again, we know that Mr. Wesley was a thorough going and high-toned monarchist, especially at the close of his life,

sustaining the King and Parliament in all their measures against the American Colonies, declaring the men of the Revolution to be "rebels," expunging, in consequence, the names of the American Methodists from the General Society, (see Hampson's life, vol. 3d p 134,) and using all his tremendous influence, which Dr. Whitehead compared to that of a "mighty torrent gathering strength in its progress," and which could effect "the opinions of between 4 & 500,000 people on any important occasion which might concern the Society or the nation at large." (see Whitehead's Life, vol. 2. p 474.)

Who has not heard of his "Calm Address to our American Colonies"—"a hundred thousand copies of which were dispersed throughout England and Ireland, the effect of which, exceeded his most sanguine expectations"—great quantities of which were sent to this country and their circulation suppressed,—and which provoked the following celebrated rebuke from Junius?

"I have read your Address to the Americans with much surprise and concern. That a man, after a long life devoted to the awful concerns of religion, and a rigidity of morals strikingly contrasted to the times, should, in his old age, step forth a champion in a political controversy, is a paradox only to be solved by a reflection on the general motives of such compositions. They exhibit a proof, Mr. Wesley, that the most perfect men have hopes on earth as well as in heaven; and, indeed, you have the modesty not to forbid us to believe so."

"When you deliver your opinion, you say, you may be the better believed because unbiased; and then express yourself in this unguarded language—'I gain nothing by the Americans nor by the Government, and probably never shall.' This is not only an invitation to the Minister to reward your pious labors, but a thorn in his foot, if he overlooks them. Had you said, and *positively never will*, I should then, as I always have, believed you to be an honest and pious man."

"And now, Mr. Wesley, I take my leave of you. You have forgot the precept of your Master, that God and Mammon cannot be served together. You have one eye upon a pension and the other up to heaven—one hand stretched out to the King, the other raised up to God. I pray that the first may reward you and the last forgive you."

Who has not read Mr. Wesley's surprising justification of this "Calm Address"—first published in "Floyd's Evening Post," and now to be found in his journal of November 1775.

"Sir, I have been seriously asked, 'from what motives did you publish your Calm Address to the American Colonies?' I seriously answer, not to get money. Had that been my motive I should have swelled it into a shilling pamphlet," &c.

"Not to get preferment for myself or my brother's children," &c.

"Not to please any man living," &c.

"Least of all did I write to inflame any ; just the contrary. I contributed my will towards putting out the flame, which rages all over the land ; this I have more opportunity for observing than any other man in England ; and I see many pouring oil into the flame by crying out, 'How unjustly, how cruelly the King is using the poor Americans, who are only contending for their liberty and their legal privileges.'

"Now, there is no possible way to put out this flame or hinder its rising higher and higher, but to show that the Americans are not used either cruelly or unjustly ; that they are not injured at all, seeing that they are not contending for liberty; neither for any legal privileges ; for they enjoy all that charters grant. But what they contend for is, the illegal privilege of being exempt from taxation—a privilege this, which no charter ever gave to any American colony yet, which no charter can give, which, in fact, our colonies never had, which they never claimed till the present reign, and probably they would not have claimed it now, had they not been incited thereto by letters from England. One of these letters was read according to the writer, not only at the Continental Congress, but likewise in many Congregations throughout the combined provinces. This being the real state of the question without any coloring or aggravation, what impartial man can either blame the King or commend the Americans. With this view, to quench the fire, by laying the blame where it is due, the Calm Address was written."

But more than this,—who has not read the author's supplement to this "Calm Addres," written about two years after, in 1777, and entitled, "A Calm Address to the inhabitants of England," and in which is found such language as this throughout—

"Brethren! Countrymen! What are the reflections which now naturally arise in your breasts? Do you not immediately observe that after this huge outcry for liberty which has echoed through America, there is not the very shadow of liberty left in the confederate provinces. There is no liberty of the Press. A man may more safely print against the Church in Italy or Spain, than publish a title against the Congress. There is no religious liberty, for what Minister is permitted to follow his conscience in the execution of his office? There is no civil liberty." &c.

"Do you not observe, wherever these bawlers for liberty govern, there is the vilest slavery? No man there can say that his goods are his own. They are absolutely at the disposal of the mob or of Congress."

And for this frightful picture of America he professed to have the authority of letters from eminent individuals.

"Do you ask, says a gentleman who writes from Philadelphia, what is the present state of these provinces? You may see in Ezekiel's roll—such is the condition of this country 'It is written within and without, lamentation and mourning and wo.' See vol. 6 of Wesley's Works, p 330.

Now it is not because I wish to hold up the memory of Mr. Wesley to odium, in consequence of his political opinions and prejudices, that I have introduced these facts, for sensible people have never considered him more than a man, and they will

know how to make allowance for all such frailties in his character. It is not because I wish to show that his views and opinions are not always to be relied upon,—although there is pretty good evidence here, that having mistaken the political condition of America, he may not have acted altogether wisely when providing for our religious wants and interests. It is not because I wish to rebut the miserable attempt which has been made to excite a prejudice against the Church, as somehow or other connected with the Church of England, and therefore unfriendly to the liberties of the country,—although Methodist Ministers should be careful in this particular, lest the force of their “historical remembrances,” shall be turned against themselves. It is not because I would speak of the many worthy and excellent members of the Methodist Society as holding the same views and opinions, although when some among them are so much influenced by the mere authority of human names, it is not wonderful that the name of their acknowledged “father and founder” should give weight and importance to his sentiments. It is not because I would bring to light the singular inconsistency of Mr. Wesley, in sending his congratulatory letter to the Methodists in America, for that “liberty wherewith God had so strangely set them free,” and which, in his opinion, was no liberty at all. No! for none of these purposes have I expressly introduced the extracts, but simply to show that a man so loyal to the King and Parliament *in all things*, could scarcely be expected to turn immediately around and violate one of the established laws of the same King and Parliament. And this, certainly, he must have done, if, as it is pretended, he consecrated Dr. Coke a Bishop, in the city of Bristol; for it was one of the established laws, that no individual should be ordained a Bishop in England “without the consent of the King and Parliament;” and this law referred, not only to the ordination of Bishops to act as Bishops in England, but to the ordination of *Bishops in England*, for any part of the world. Did Mr. Wesley violate the law? No ordinary evidence can convince us of the fact.

VII. Again, we know that Dr. Coke is said to have been or-

dained a Bishop, Sept. 2, 1784—that immediately after he set sail for America and arrived in New-York on the 3d of November—that a general Conference was called and held its session in Baltimore on the 24th Dec.—that at that general Conference Mr. Asbury is said to have been *ordained at three different times* and by *three separate ordinations*, 1st a Deacon, 2d an Elder, 3d a Bishop—that soon after the closing of the Conference Dr. Coke left the country for England, and arrived in England in time to attend the English Conference which commenced its session on the 26th of July.

Now the question arises, how was he received in England? As a Bishop? As even the Greek Bishop, Erasmus, had been received before? as possessing a power and authority superior to Presbyters? superior to Mr. Wesley himself? So far from it, that Mr. Watson acknowledges that “*he used no such title, and made no such pretension.*”

But more than this. In the “History of the Rise and Progress of Methodism,” I find the following record: “In the Conference of 1791, Mr. William Thompson was chosen President, and Dr. Coke *Secretary.*” “In 1792 Mr. Alexander Mather was chosen President, and *Dr. Coke Secretary;*” and so in three following Conferences we find the same Dr. Coke acting, not as Bishop, not even as Superintendent, but *Secretary.* Can it be, then, that Mr. Wesley really intended to confer the Episcopate upon Dr. Coke—to make him a Bishop by a triple ordination—to give him any “*fuller powers*” than those which he possessed as a simple Presbyter, and this not merely in the Methodist Society, but “*in the Church of God,*” according to the ordination service in the Book of Discipline? Can this be believed, and yet “no such title be used, no such pretension be made,” and no kind of respect be paid either to the man or the office, *in consequence* of Mr. Wesley’s ordination, and this in the very place where it is said that all the powers of the Episcopate were, indeed, conferred? Here, then, is another reason why no ordinary evidence can convince us of the fact.

VIII. But again we know, that in the “Annotations” of Messrs.

Coke and Asbury, this reason is given for the exercise of certain Episcopal duties; for in answer to the questions, "What is the Bishop's duty," and "Why,"—it is said, "*Mr. Wesley did so.*" "*He presided in the Conferences; fixed the appointments of the preachers for their several circuits, changed, received or suspended preachers—superintended the temporal and spiritual business, and consecrated two Bishops, Thomas Coke and Alexander Mather, one before the present Episcopal plan took place in America, the other afterwards.*"

Now, without speaking of the strange reason here given for the exercise of important "*temporal and spiritual*" duties by Christian Ministers; without remarking upon the extraordinary fact that the practice and writings of the Apostles seem to have been forgotten, and the example of Mr. Wesley held up as binding, or at least sufficient for them; without alluding particularly to the acknowledgment, that when the first Bishop (Dr. Coke) was consecrated, "*the present Episcopal plan*" had not taken place, I would direct attention especially to the fact that a *new Bishop is here introduced*—one whose name is not generally to be found in the catalogue, and who, it is probable, never claimed for himself this high and exalted dignity. Mr. Alexander Mather, a Bishop! When did his consecration take place? After that of Dr. Coke, we are informed; but when? Has no record been kept of the transaction? Does not every body know that the most remarkable characteristic in all Mr. Wesley's writings, is the minuteness of his private journal, taking notice of the most trivial incidents, and yet, in no part of his works can I find any allusion to Mr. Mather's consecration. There are letters to Mr. Mather and letters respecting him, but not the slightest reference to him either as a Bishop or as possessing any higher authority than a plain Methodist preacher. True it is, that I find this record August 1st, 1785, "*Having with a few select friends, weighed the matter thoroughly, I yielded to their judgment, and set apart three of our well tried preachers, John Pawson, Thomas Hanby and Joseph Taylor to minister in Scotland.*" Now these men, it seems, were already preachers, and their setting apart,

consisted in sending them to "minister" in a particular field of labor. Was any thing more intended by Mr. Wesley? Has he not explained his conduct in his remarks upon the case of Barnabas and Saul? In what other way did he consecrate Mr. Mather, a Bishop? And may it not be, after all, that this is the only way in which he ever consecrated Doctor Coke?

Here, then, for the present, I shall rest the question, and proceed in my next, to the examination of the direct testimony.

Yours, &c.

J. A. B.

THE CLAIMS OF METHODIST EPISCOPACY.

[CONTINUED.]

DEAR SIR—With all the light, which the facts stated in my preceding letter, are able to shed upon the subject, I come now to an examination of the direct and positive evidence by which the claims of Doctor Coke are supposed to be sustained, and by which it is maintained, that Mr. Wesley really intended to consecrate a Bishop for America.

The reader will remember the proposition in my last—not that there is no evidence, but that there is *no good and sufficient evidence*; and from what has already been said, I think every individual must at once acknowledge, that no ordinary evidence should convince us of the fact. We require such proof as shall overbalance the difficulties and objections.

I. The first witness whom I shall call to the stand is Dr. Whitehead, the author of the first published, and the most authentic and valuable Memoir of Mr. Wesley; his most intimate and confidential friend, who was with him in his last moments, and preached his funeral sermon; who was requested immediately after by the English Conference to write his life, and was one of the individuals to whom Mr. Wesley left his manuscripts by will.

What is the testimony of Dr. Whitehead?

"It is not easy" (says Dr. W. vol. 2, p 415,) to assign a sufficient reason why Mr. Wesley in his *eighty-second year* should depart from a line of conduct he had hitherto so strictly observed; especially if he acted according to his own judgement, and of his own free choice. However this may be, a plan was proposed in private, to a few Clergymen who attended the Conference this year, (1784) at Leeds, that Mr. Wesley should *ordain one or two preachers for the Societies in America*.

But the Clergymen *opposed it*. Mr. Fletcher was consulted by letter, who advised, that *a Bishop should be prevailed upon, if possible, to ordain them*; and then Mr. Wesley might appoint to such offices in the Societies as he thought proper, and give them letters testimonial of the appointments he had

given them. Mr. Wesley well knew, that no Bishop would ordain them at his recommendation, and *therefore* seemed inclined to do it himself. In this purpose, however, he appeared so languid, if not wavering, that Dr. Coke thought it necessary to use some further means to urge him to the performance of it. Accordingly, August 9th, Mr. Wesley being then in Wales, on his way to Bristol, the Doctor sent him the following letter."

Here, before giving the letter, let us pause to reflect.

We find that now for the first time in the history of Methodism, the plan of *ordination*, is proposed,—not of a mere setting apart or appointing to certain fields of labor, as had heretofore been done, but of actual ordination. This plan, however, did not then embrace the ordination of a Bishop to organize a "Methodist Episcopal Church in America," but of "*one or two preachers for the Societies*." Up to this time, it will be remembered, all the preachers in America were Laymen,—they did not presume to consider themselves Ministers authorized to administer the sacraments; and Mr. Asbury had written to Mr. Wesley informing him of their destitute condition, in this respect, and of a "schism" in consequence of some of the preachers attempting to administer the sacraments, which "*schismatical spirit*," Mr. Asbury had "beat down;" and then Mr. Asbury was requested "to take proper measures, that the people might enjoy the privileges of other Churches, and no longer be deprived of the Christian sacraments." We understand, therefore, that this "*plan proposed*" at Leeds, was for nothing more than the ordination of one or two preachers, not to ordain others, not to act as Bishops, but to supply the present necessities and administer the sacraments to the people.

We find, that this *plan*, was not *openly proposed to the Conference*, as so important a measure affecting the whole body and being confessedly *new*, certainly should have been; but "*in private, to a few Clergymen*,"—and we find that by these Clergymen even this plan was *opposed*; and Mr. Fletcher, the well known author of the "*Appeal, &c.,*" whose writings will ever be held in high estimation by all Christians, and whose influence then, among the Methodists was scarcely less than that of Mr. Wesley himself, advised ordination, not by Mr. Wesley, but by a *Bishop*, and showing thereby, that in his estimation, Mr. Wesley was no

*This must end is due to Dr. Michael Rose and
his testimony has not transpired*

Bishop in the proper acceptation of that term, nor possessed of any power of ordination.

We find, also, that Mr. Wesley had then arrived at that period of life, when his faculties began to wane,—when as a means of prudence, in human laws, men are not generally allowed even to sit in judgement upon the temporal interests of the world, and when, considering the frailties of human nature, it is not wonderful that he should *seem inclined to do it himself*, and this, not because he thought that he possessed the power, but because “*he knew that no Bishop would ordain them.*”

Here it may be stated that the Episcopal Church in Connecticut had already organized under the new state of things, and had elected Dr. Samuel Seabury their Bishop, who was then in England for the purpose of obtaining the Episcopate, and was finally consecrated in Scotland on the 14th of November of the same year, *before* the meeting of the Conference at Baltimore on the 24th of the succeeding month, when Dr. Coke was *received*. This fact will account for the *haste* of Dr. Coke, and for the reason why Mr. Wesley knew that “no Bishop would ordain them.” We find, also, that notwithstanding Mr. Wesley’s *inclinations*, he was still “*languid, if not wavering,*” and as his letter, which we are to consider hereafter will show, he had some “*scruples*” of conscience. Hence, in using some further means to urge him to the performance of it,” Dr. Coke wrote to him the following letter, referred to above by Dr. Whitehead:

“Honored and Dear Sir,

“The more maturely I consider the subject, the more *expedient* it appears to me, that the power of ordaining others, should be received by me from you, by the imposition of your hands; and that you should lay hands upon brother Whatcoat, and brother Vasey, for the following reasons: 1. It seems to me the most scriptural way, and most agreeable to the practice of the primitive churches. 2. I *may* want all the influence in America, which you can throw into my scale. Mr. Brackenbury informed me at Leeds, that he saw a letter in London, from Mr. Asbury, in which he observed, that he would not receive any person deputed by you with any part of the superintendency of the work invested in him; or words which evidently implied so much. I do not find any, the least degree of prejudice in my mind against Mr. Asbury, on the contrary a very great love and esteem: and am determined not to stir a finger without his consent, unless mere sheer necessity obliges me; but rather to lie at his feet in all things. But as the journey is long, and you cannot spare me often, and it is well to provide against *all events*, and an authority *formally* received

from you, will (I am conscious of it) be fully admitted by the people, and my exercising the office of Ordination without that *formal* authority may be disputed, if there be any opposition in any other account: I could therefore *earnestly* wish you would extend that power, in this instance, which I have not the shadow of doubt but God hath invested you with for the good of our connexion. I think you have tried me too often to doubt, whether I will in any degree use the power you are pleased to invest me with, further than I believe absolutely necessary for the prosperity of the work. In respect to my brethren (Whatcoat and Vasey) it is very uncertain indeed, whether any of the clergy mentioned by brother Rankin, will stir a step with me in the work, except Mr. Jarratt; and it is by no means certain that even he will choose to join me in ordaining: and propriety and universal practice make it expedient, that I should have two Presbyters with me in this work. In short it appears to me that every thing should be prepared, and every thing proper to be done that can possibly be done *this side the water*. You can do all this in Mr. C—n's house, in your *chamber*; and afterwards according to Mr. Fletcher's advice [Mr. Fletcher advised ordination by a *Bishop*] give us letters testimonial of the different offices with which you have been pleased to invest us. For the purpose of laying hands on brothers Whatcoat and Vasey, I can bring Mr. C. down with me, by which you will have two Presbyters with you. In respect to brother Rankin's argument, that you will escape a great deal of *odium* by omitting this, it is nothing. Either it will be known or not known; if not known, then no *odium* will arise: but if known, you will be obliged to acknowledge that I acted under your direction, or suffer me to sink under the weight of my enemies, with perhaps your brother at the head of them. I shall entreat you to ponder these things.

Your most dutiful

T. COKE.^{**}

"This letter," says Dr. Whitehead, "affords matter for several observations both of the serious and *comic* kind; but I shall not indulge myself on the occasion it so fairly offers. The attentive reader who examines every part of it, will be at no loss to conjecture to whose influence we are to impute Mr. Wesley's conduct in the present business. That Mr. Wesley should suffer himself to be so far influenced, in a matter of the utmost importance both to his own character and the Societies, by a man, of whose judgement in advising, and talents in conducting any affair he had no very high opinion, is truly astonishing; but so it was! Mr. Wesley came to Bristol, and, September 1st, every thing being prepared as proposed above, he complied with the Doctor's *earnest wish*, by consecrating him one of the Bishops, and Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey, Presbyters of the new *Methodist Episcopal Church in America*. No doubt the three gentlemen were highly gratified with their new titles: as we often see both young and *old children* gratified with gilded toys, though clumsily made, and of no real value or use excepting to quiet the cries of those for whom they are prepared."

Again says Dr. Whitehead, speaking of Dr. Coke's reasons—"All this is intelligible and clear, and I am confident these reasons would have satisfied any man, in similar circumstances, who had considered *ordination as a mere stalking-horse, to gain influence and dominion.*"

Here, then, is the testimony of Dr. Whitehead, and although it is evident that he regarded the ordination of Dr. Coke to the Episcopate by Mr. Wesley as a matter of joke rather than of se-

rious consideration, so far as it concerned his *real* title to that office, still it is testimony unequivocal to the fact that in his opinion, Mr. Wesley did *intend* so to ordain him.

But after all, this is only the *opinion* of Dr. Whitehead, deserving indeed of great respect, but at the same time not being founded upon any documents under the hand of Mr. Wesley himself, nor upon any express declarations from him so far as we know, we may certainly be permitted to dissent, or at least to examine the facts stated by him, and see whether they bear him out in the opinion.

What says the letter of Dr. Coke? Evidently it does not come out *plain*, and express the desire that Mr. Wesley should consecrate him a Bishop. Merely for the sake of "*expediency*," not because he thought that Mr. Wesley could really confer upon him any authority which he did not before possess, but to give him greater "*influence*," and enable him to meet the objections which might be urged against him on his arrival in this country—for these reasons he desired only a "*formal*" ordination, not a *real* one, but one which should look like it, and be acknowledged by the people, and especially by Mr. Asbury, who might stand in his way, as he had some reason to fear. It was this power, the power of giving his *influence*, which he thought without a shadow of doubt, God had invested him with, and this not for the good of the *Church*, as he would have said if he had referred to any other power, but "*for the good of our connexion*."

In all this letter there is no appeal to Mr. Wesley actually to consecrate him a Bishop—no exposition of his design to establish a new *Church*, and no acknowledgement of Mr. Wesley's authority over him in the Ministry. And besides this, he desired Mr. Wesley to perform the act, the *formal* act, in *secret*, and expressed his intention to *keep it a secret*, unless it should become absolutely necessary to divulge it, and therefore it *might not be known*. Surely then it may be that Mr. Wesley was imposed upon, unintentionally perhaps, but nevertheless imposed upon, and that he never *intended* to do that which Dr. Coke afterwards claimed, and, it may be, thought, he did. There is much room

certainly to doubt, and therefore no good and sufficient reason to believe, that he ever seriously *intended*, to consecrate Dr. Coke a Bishop.

II. I come now to another branch of testimony—the opinions of the English Methodists at the time. Did they believe that Mr. Wesley had “departed from the line of conduct which he had hitherto so strictly observed,” and that he had really consecrated Dr. Coke a Bishop? On this subject Dr. Whitehead gives us the following facts under the head of “Opinions & Debates,” &c. “on the new plan of ordination,” (Chap. 5, vol. 2.)

“The following is part of a letter,” says he “from one preacher to another, when the report that Mr. Wesley had ordained some of the preachers, first began to be circulated in the Societies. It may serve to show us what opinion the uninfected itinerants entertained of this strange business:— ‘Ordination among Methodists! Amazing indeed! I could not force myself to credit the report which spread here, having not then seen the minutes, but now I can doubt it no longer. And so we have *Methodist Parsons of our own!* and a new mode of ordination-to-be-sure, on the *Presbyterian* plan! In spite of a million declarations to the contrary! I am fairly confounded. Now the ice is broke, let us conjecture a little the probable issue of this *new thing in the earth*. You say we must reason and debate the matter. Alas! it is too late. Surely it never began in the midst of a multitude of councillors. Who could imagine that this important matter would have *stole* into being, and be obtruded upon the body, without their being so much as apprised of it or consulted on so weighty a point? Who is the father of this *monster*, so long dreaded by the father of his people, and by most of his *sons*? Whoever he be, *time will prove him to be a felon to Methodism, and discover his assassinating knife sticking fast in the vitals of its body.*’”

“Another old preacher,” says Dr. Whitehead, writing to his friend, delivers his opinions to the following purpose. “I wish they had all been asleep when they began this business of ordination; it is neither *Episcopal* nor *Presbyterian*, but a mere hodge-podge of inconsistency.”

Now these extracts introduced by Dr. Whitehead for the purpose of showing the general sentiment which prevailed among the itinerating Ministers, are certainly enough for the purpose, and I confess that they are more than enough to prove that in their opinion, Mr. Wesley had actually introduced a new plan of ordination, or rather that a new plan had been introduced. But notwithstanding all this, we are still disposed to defend the memory of that great man, and to demand stronger proof, something more unquestionable than the mere *opinions* of methodist preachers then living; something about which there can be no mistake.

III. The next witness therefore whom I shall call to the stand is Mr. Charles Wesley, the younger brother and coadjutor of John, who began with him at Oxford, and continued with him, laboring as faithfully in the cause of his divine Lord and Master, and with equal success, though with less prominence; and who carried with him to the grave an unblemished reputation as an honest and consistent Christian minister. (See Appendix.)

What is his testimony? About four months after the supposed ordination of Dr. Coke, he wrote a letter to the Rev. Dr. Chandler, of the Episcopal Church, who was then in London. An extract from that letter I gave you in my second communication, but will here transcribe the whole as a valuable and important document connected with the history of Methodism.

Rev. Charles Wesley to Dr. Chandler.

LONDON, April 23rd, 1785.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR—

As you are setting out for America, and I for a more distant country, I think it needful to leave with you some account of myself, and my companions through life. At eight years old, in 1715, I was sent by my father, rector of Epworth, to Westminster school, and placed under the care of my elder brother Samuel, a strict Churchman, who brought me up in his own principles. In 1727 I was elected student of Christ Church. My brother John was then fellow of Lincoln.

The first year at college I lost in diversions. The next I betook myself to study. Diligence led me into serious thinking. I went to the weekly sacrament, and persuaded two or three young scholars to accompany me; and likewise, to observe the *method* of study prescribed by the statutes of the university. This gained me the harmless nickname of *Methodist*. In half a year my brother left his curacy of Epworth and came to our assistance. We then proceeded regularly in our studies, and in doing what good we could to the bodies and souls of men.

I took my degrees, and only thought of spending all my days at Oxford; but my brother who always had the ascendant over me, persuaded me to accompany him and Mr. Oglethorpe, to Georgia. I dreaded exceedingly entering into holy orders; but he over-ruled me here also; and I was ordained deacon by the bishop of Oxford, on Sunday, and the next, priest by the bishop of London.

Our only design was to do all the good we could, as ministers of the church of England, to which we were firmly attached both by education and principle. My brother still acknowledged her the best national church in the world.

In 1736 we arrived as missionaries in Georgia. My brother took charge of Savannah, and I of Frederica; waiting for an opportunity of preaching to the Indians. I was, in the mean time, secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe, and also secretary of Indian affairs.

The hardships of lying upon the ground, &c. soon threw me into a fever and dysentery, which forced me in half a year to return to England. My brother returned the next year. Still we had no plan but to serve God and the church

of England. The lost sheep of this fold were our principal care: not excluding any Christians of whatever denomination, who were willing to add the power of godliness to their own particular form.

Our elder brother Samuel was alarmed at our going on, and strongly expressed his fears of its ending in a separation from the church. All our enemies prophesied the same. This confirmed us the more in our resolution to continue in our calling: which we constantly avowed both in public and private, by word and preaching, and writing; exhorting all our hearers to follow our example.

My brother drew up rules for our Society, one of which was, constantly to attend the church prayers and sacrament. When we were no longer permitted to preach in the churches, we preached (but never in church hours) in houses, or fields, and sent from thence, or rather carried, multitudes to church, who had never been there before. Our society, in most places, made the bulk of the congregation both at prayers and sacrament.

I never lost my dread of a separation, or ceased to guard our society against it. I frequently told them, "I am your servant as long as you remain members of the church of England, but no longer. Should you ever forsake her you renounce me." Some of our lay-preachers very early discovered an inclination to separate, which induced my brother to publish *reasons against a separation*. As often as it appeared, we beat down the schismatical spirit. If any one did leave the church, at the same time he left our society. For fifty years we kept the sheep in the fold, and having filled the number of our days, only waited to depart in peace.

After our having continued friends for above seventy years, and fellow-laborers for above fifty, can anything but death part us? I can scarcely yet believe, that in his eighty-second year, my brother, my old intimate friend and companion, should have assumed the episcopal character, ordained elders, consecrated a bishop, and sent him to ordain the lay-preachers in America. I was then in Bristol at his elbow; yet he never gave me the least hint of his intention. How was he surprised into so rash an action? He certainly persuaded himself that it was right.

Lord Mansfield said to me last year, that *ordination was separation*. This my brother does not, and will not see; or that he has renounced the principles and practices of his whole life; that he has acted contrary to all his declarations, protestations and writings; robbed his friends of their boasting; realized the nag's head ordination; and left an indelible blot on his name, as long as it shall be remembered.

Thus our partnership here is dissolved; but not our friendship. I have taken him for better for worse till death us do part, or rather reunite us in love inseparable. I have lived on earth a little too long, who have to see this evil day; but I shall very soon be taken from it, in steadfast faith that the Lord will maintain his own cause and carry on his work, and fulfil his promise to his church; "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

Permit me to subscribe myself, Reverend and dear Sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant and brother,

CHARLES WESLEY.

P. S. What will become of these poor sheep in the wilderness, the American Methodists? How have they been betrayed into a separation from the church of England, which their preachers and they no more intended than the Methodists here? Had they had patience a little longer, they would have seen a *real primitive bishop* in America, *duly consecrated by three Scotch bishops* who had their consecration from the English bishops, and are acknowledged by them as the same with themselves. There is, therefore, not the least difference between

the members of bishop Seabury's church, and the members of the church of England.

You know I had the happiness to converse with that truly apostolic man, who is esteemed by all that know him, as much as by you and me. He told me he looked upon the Methodists in America as sound members of the church, and was ready to ordain any of their preachers, whom he should find duly qualified. His ordination would be indeed genuine, valid and episcopal. But what are your poor Methodists now? only a new sect of Presbyterians. And after my brother's death, which is now so very near, what will be their end? They will lose all their influence and importance; they will turn aside to vain janglings; they will settle again upon their lees, and, like other sects of dissenters, come to nothing.

"In August," says Dr. Whitehead, "Mr. Charles Wesley took courage and wrote to his brother on the subject," from which letter the following extracts are given.

"I have been reading over and over again your reasons against a separation, and entreat you in the name of God, and for Christ's sake to read them again yourself with previous prayer: and stop and proceed no further until you receive an answer to the enquiry, *Lord what wouldest thou have me to do?* Every word of your eleven pages deserves the deepest consideration; not to mention my testimony and hymns. Only the seventh I could wish you to read—as a prophecy which I pray God may never come to pass. Near thirty years since then, you have stood against the importunate solicitations of your preachers, who have scarcely at last prevailed. I was your natural ally and faithful friend, and while you continued faithful to yourself, we two could chase a thousand. If they had not divided us, they could never have overcome you. But when once you began ordaining for America, I knew, and you knew, that your preachers here would never rest, till you ordained them. You told me, 'they would separate by and by.' The Doctor tells us the same. His 'Methodist Episcopal Church' at Baltimore was intended to beget a "Methodist Episcopal Church here. You know he comes armed with your authority to make us all dissenters. One of your 'Sons' assured me that not a preacher in London, would refuse orders from the Doctor. It is evident that all seek their own, and prefer their own interest to your honor; which not one of them scruples to sacrifice to his own ambition. Alas! what trouble are you preparing for yourself, as well as for me, and for your oldest and truest and best friends. Before you have quite broken down the bridge, stop and consider. If your sons have no regard for you, have some regard for yourself. *Go to your grave in peace;* at least suffer me to go first, before this ruin be under your hand. So much I think you owe to my father, to my brother and to me, as to stay till I am taken from the evil. I am on the brink of the grave, do not push me in, or imbieter my last moments. Let us not leave an indelible blot upon our memory,—but let us leave behind us the name and character of honest men."

It was in answer to this, that Mr. John Wesley wrote the letter dated Plymouth, in my second communication, to which for that and for the reply of Charles, the reader is referred.

After giving these letters Dr. Whitehead remarks:

"Mr. Charles Wesley has spoken chiefly of the impropriety of the step his brother had taken in ordaining Dr. Coke, and others in the character of a *bishop*;

but it will be proper to make an observation or two on the *validity* of his proceeding. The general position he lays down is, that “*Bishops and Presbyters were the same order and had the same right to ordain.*” Upon this principle he ordained or consecrated Dr. Coke. Now, the *very act of ordaining implies a superior right or a superior authority.* If it be allowed that Mr. Wesley had a *superior right to ordain* the Doctor, then the general position is false. If it be said he had a *superior authority* but no *superior right*, then it will follow that Mr. Wesley exercised *superior authority* without any *right* so to do; which is the very thing for which he is blamed. In both cases, the ordination must be void and of no effect.

But according to Lord King [whose authority Mr. Wesley pleaded] the general position is not strictly or universally true. From a comparison of various testimonies of ancient church writers, he draws this conclusion, ‘that the Presbyters were different from the Bishops in *grade, or in degree,* but they were equal to them in *ordine or order.*’ He tells us that the Bishop was the proper Pastor or incumbent of the Church over which he presided, and that the Presbyters in that Church were only his assistants or curates, and therefore could do nothing in his church without his direction or permission. But whatever superiority a Bishop had over the Presbyters of his own church, *it was solemnly and publicly conferred upon him*, by the general suffrage of the Presbyters and people over whom he was to preside. I suppose that if any Presbyter had assumed the episcopal character without such choice and public ordination to his office, he would have been excommunicated by the other churches. But Mr. Wesley was never publicly elected by any Presbyters and people to the office of a Bishop, nor even consecrated to it; which made his brother Charles say,

‘So easily are Bishops made,
By man’s or woman’s whim,
Wesley his hands on Coke hath laid
But who laid hands on him’.

The answer is, nobody. His episcopal authority, was a mere gratuitous assumption of power to himself, contrary to the usage of every church, ancient or modern, where the order of Bishops had been admitted. There is no precedent either in the New Testament or in church history, that can justify his proceeding in this affair. And as Mr. Wesley had received no *right* to exercise *episcopal authority*, either from any Bishops, Presbyters or people, he certainly could not convey any *right* to others. *His ordinations, therefore, are spurious and of no validity.*

“Nor can Mr. Wesley’s practice of ordaining be justified by those reasons which Presbyterians adduce in favor of their own method of ordaining to the ministry; for Mr. Wesley ordained not as a Presbyter, but as a *Bishop!* his ordinations, therefore, were not *Presbyterian*, nor will the arguments for Presbyterian ordinations apply to them.”

Let us review the arguments on this subject reduced to a few propositions.

1st. Mr. Wesley in ordaining or consecrating Dr. Coke a Bishop, acted in direct contradiction to the principle on which he attempts to defend his practice of ordaining at all.

2nd. As Mr. Wesley was never elected or chosen by any church to be a Bishop, nor ever consecrated to the office either by Bishops or Presbyters, he had not the shadow of *right* to exercise episcopal authority in ordaining others according to the rules of any church ancient or modern.

3rd. Had he possessed the *right* to ordain, either as a Bishop or Presbyter, (though he never did ordain as a Presbyter,) yet his ordinations being done in *secret*, were rendered thereby invalid and of no effect, according to the established order of the Primitive church and of all Protestant churches.

4th. The consequence from the whole is that the persons whom Mr. Wesley ordained have no more right to exercise the ministerial functions than they had before he laid his hands upon them.

A scheme of ordination so full of confusion and absurdity, as that among the Methodists, can surely never fliate on Mr. Wesley: it must have proceeded from some more *chaotic* brain, where wild confusion reigns. Nor can I easily believe that Mr. Wesley would ever have adopted so mis-shapen a brat, had not his clear perception of things been rendered feeble and dim, by flattery, persuasion and age.

But I willingly quit a subject which is very unpleasant, and most sincerely wish that both the practice of ordaining among the Methodists and the memory of it were buried in oblivion. And were the practice, which in my view of it is pregnant with mischief, totally to cease, never to be raised, I would tear the memory of it from these pages, as soon as they are printed." Whitehead's Life, vol. 2, p 430-9.

Such is the testimony of Mr. Charles Wesley, together with the comments of Dr. Whitehead.

Now after such a mass of testimony coming from the best sources, it may seem to be highly presumptuous for any one to doubt whether Mr. Wesley really intended to consecrate Dr. Coke a Bishop; and yet I think it will appear in the sequel that this is a point after all, which may be fairly questioned, for we have no where found as yet any plain acknowledgement on the part of Mr. Wesley, nor any document under his hand declaring the fact.

IV. I pass on therefore to the testimony of Dr. Coke, and for the purpose of saving time, I shall at once admit that he often claimed to have been consecrated a Bishop by Mr. Wesley; and it has already been seen that soon after his arrival in this country, he met the Conference assembled in Baltimore, and there pretended to consecrate Mr. Asbury a Bishop by a triple ordination. On that occasion, "he preached a Sermon in which he labored to defend the new state of things," and to convince the people, not that he had received a mere "*formal power*," but a real and valid authority from Mr. Wesley himself. In relation to that Sermon Dr. Whitehead remarks as follows:—

"Dr. Coke begins this defence by the most severe censures on the Clergy and on the English hierarchy. It would answer no valuable purpose to transcribe them, but it may be well to observe the very striking difference between the proceedings at the commencement of Methodism, and the practice now adopted. 'We are not seceders,' said Mr. Wesley, 'nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The seceders

laid the very foundation of their work in judging and condemning others; we laid the foundation of our work in judging and condemning ourselves. They begin every where in showing their hearers how fallen the *Church and Ministers* are; we begin every where in showing our hearers how fallen they themselves are.' Dr. Coke, in laying the foundation of his new Church in America, adopted the principles and practice, in this respect, of the seceders, and quitted those of the old Methodists. *He tells Mr. Wesley some time after, in a letter from Ireland, that he would as soon commit adultery, as preach publicly against the Church.*"

"Dr. Coke puts this question into the mouth of an objector, 'but what right have you to ordain?' 'The same right,' answers the Dr. 'as most of the Reformed Churches of Christendom—our ordination in the lowest view, being equal to any of the *Presbyterian*, as originating with three *Presbyters* of the *Ch. of England*. It is possible the Dr. might believe himself when he wrote this sentence. 'But is it true,' continues Whitehead, 'that the presence of three Presbyters in a *private chamber*, is the only requisite essentially necessary to give validity to an ordination among the *Presbyterians*? I apprehend not. Nor do I know any denomination of *dissenters* among whom such a *secret ordination*, would be deemed valid.'

"Again Dr. Coke supposes an objector to ask—'but what right have you to exercise the *episcopal office*?' 'To me,' replies the Dr., 'most manifest and clear. God has been pleased by Mr. Wesley, to raise up in America and Europe, a numerous Society well known by the name of *Methodists*. The whole body have invariably esteemed this man, as the Chief Pastor under Christ. He has always appointed their religious officers from the highest to the lowest, by himself or his delegate. And we are fully persuaded there is no *Church office*, which he judges expedient, for the welfare of the people entrusted to his charge, but as essential to his station, he has a power to ordain. After a long deliberation, he saw it his duty to form his society in America into an independent Church; but he loved the most excellent *Liturgy of the Church of England*; he loved its rites and ceremonies, and therefore adopted them in most instances in the present case.'

"It is not easy," says Dr. Whitehead, "to make observations on an argument like this, without falling into levity on the one hand; or too great severity on the other. Brevity, therefore, will be the best security. The Doctor states the matter thus, 'He (Mr. Wesley) has always appointed the religious officers from the highest to the lowest, (among the Methodists,) by himself or his delegate, and we are fully perswaded there is no *Church office* which he judges expedient for the people, but as essential to his station he has power to ordain.'

"Now, if these words contain any thing like an argument, they must mean that the *officers* whom Mr. Wesley had always appointed were *Church officers*, and consequent'y that his *Societies* were *churches*. If this be not the meaning then the words which go before, have no immediate connexion with the conclusion drawn from them. The premises and the conclusion would speak of two things totally different, and therefore, the one could not be inferred from the other. But the minutes of Conference and Mr. Wesley's other writings testify in the most express manner, that the Methodist Societies were *not churches*; that the appointments and rules he made, were nothing more than *prudential regulations*, which he changed as circumstances altered. It cannot, therefore, be argued that because Mr. Wesley had always exercised the power of making prudential regulations, for the government of his *Societies*,—he had a right to ordain any *church officer* he might deem expedient; which is a thing quite different from what he had hitherto attempted to do, and consequently no right to do it, could arise out of his former practice.'

'But there is another view of this argument,' continues Dr. Whitehead, 'which makes it appear still more absurd. Whatever *power* Mr. Wesley had always exercised over his Societies, it was no proof of his *right*. Power and right are two things. Power does not imply right; otherwise the power of speech would imply a right to speak treason; the power of deceiving and robbing would imply a *right* so to do. Whatever *right*, therefore, Mr. Wesley might have, for making prudential regulations for the Societies, it cannot be proved from his *power*. But Dr. Coke here brings forward Mr. Wesley's *power*, and his former practice of it, that he may do whatever he may think expedient for the good of the people. Now if a man in common life were to plead his former practice in proof that he had a *right* to do what he might judge expedient in future, and should act upon this principle, I suppose he would soon be sent to Bedlam or to Newgate.'

Dr. Whitehead proceeds, "I shall only notice one article more, in the Doctors Sermon. Besides," says he "in addition to this, we have every qualification for an Episcopal Church, which that of Alexandria, a Church of no small note in the primitive times, possessed for two hundred years. *Our Bishops or Superintendents as we rather call them*, having been elected or received by the whole body of our Ministers throughout the continent assembled in general Conference.

"Now the truth of the fact is," says Whitehead, "that the ordinations among the Methodists bear no resemblance to the ordinations in any primitive Church, either that of Alexandria or any other when deemed *regular*.*

"Lord King, on whose authority Mr. Wesley seems to rest his cause, tells us,—'at the ordination of the Clergy, the whole body of the people were present. So an African Synod, held in 258, determined, 'That the ordination of ministers ought to be done with the knowledge and in the presence of the people; that the people being present, either the crimes of the wicked may be detected, or the merits of the good declared; and so the ordination may be just and lawful, being approved by the suffrage of all.' To the same purpose, speaks Clemens Romanus, an apostolic man, who having been acquainted with the Apostles themselves, knew their customs in all the Churches. He shows us in his first epistle to the Corinthians, that the custom was to ordain, *with the consent of the whole Church*. So Origen says, in his 8th Homily on Leviticus, '*In ordaining a Minister, the presence of the people is necessary*.' The testimonies of the ancient writers on this head are very numerous, and might easily be produced, but the authorities already mentioned will hardly be disputed. It is, indeed, evident from the Apostolic Constitutions, Lib. 8, cap. 4, and other testimonies, that in the first ages of the church, the people generally chose their own Ministers; and in every case of an election, their consent and approbation was essentially necessary. But in *direct opposition* to the practice of the primitive church, the ordinations among the Methodists were performed in *secret*. The people were not assembled. They were not consulted, nor even so much as acquainted, that Ministers were to be ordained among the Methodists as their proper pastors. The whole was performed by an arbitrary power, in the exercise of which no regard was had to the *rights* of the people, as having either judgement or choice in the matter. But Dr. Coke tells us, 'they have the same qualifications for an episcopal Church, which the Church of AL

* The case of the Church in Alexandria is pleaded by Dr. Bangs. The reader will find in the following works a full and satisfactory examination not only of this case, but of the others mentioned by him, in "Slater's Draught," Cooke's Essay, Bowden's Letters, Chapin's Primitive Church, &c.

exandria possessed, 'our Bishops,' says he, 'having been *electoed or received*, by the suffrage of the whole body of our Ministers through the Continent assembled in general Conference.'

There were but two Bishops, so called, Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury. The Doctor was ordained or *consecrated* (if the reader choose) secretly in England, and received orders to ordain Mr. Asbury in America. Now, surely, these were not elected, in any sense whatever, either by the preachers or people. 'But they were elected or received.' When a writer thus links words together of a different import, as though the meaning amounted to the same thing, we have just cause to suspect that he intends to deceive us, and lead us into a false notion of the subject he is discussing—*Received*, perhaps, they might have been, under a system of arbitrary government, which leaves no alternative to the people, nor to many of the preachers, but that of *passive obedience*, or to go about their business and quit the connexion. But their being received in any way, is nothing to the point in hand. It is, indeed, manifest, that the whole affair from first to last, bears no resemblance to the mode of electing and ordaining Ministers in the purer ages of the primitive Church." See Whitehead's Life, London Edition, vol. 2, cap. 4, p. 426—9.

Here then we have the testimony of Dr. Coke,—the fact that he pretended to have received authority from Mr. Wesley to act as a Bishop—that in virtue of this authority he proceeded to the consecration of Mr. Asbury, that on that occasion he preached a Sermon in justification of his own conduct and that of Mr. Wesley—and we have had several extracts from the Sermon, together with the comments of Dr. Whitehead, whose life of Mr. Wesley was the first published and must be acknowledged the most authentic, and who is so far from denying that Mr. Wesley intended to consecrate Dr. Coke a Bishop, that in all his reasoning, he proceeds upon the presumption, that this intention is beyond dispute.

Can it be then, that this is a question about which there is any room for debate? One would scarcely suppose it possible, and yet after all I am unwilling to believe it myself, and I have no hesitation in saying that in the sequel it will appear, that in this respect Mr. Wesley not only *may* have been misunderstood, but that there are many reasons for thinking that he has been misunderstood. The reader will remember that in our previous Letter we laid down a number of indisputable positions, all of which appeared to render it impossible for us to believe that Mr. Wesley could engage in the performance of such an act—and it was clearly proved that no ordinary evidence should convince us of the fact. He might set apart an individual to a particular field

of labor or appoint him to a special work and he might do this by the imposition of his hands, and still it would not follow that he had intended to ordain him to any order of the ministry—much less to the Episcopate. . .

V. I come now then to the instrument which Mr. Wesley gave to Dr. Coke—the credentials of his appointment—the deed of conveyance, as it were, by which the latter claimed the title of Bishop. In such an instrument we should expect to find a clear and accurate description of the thing intended to be conveyed—a full and plain declaration of all that the grantor had given. That instrument is in the following words:

"To all to whom these presents shall come, John Wesley, late fellow of Lincoln College, in Oxford, presbyter of the Church of England, sendeth greeting:

"Whereas many of the people in the southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for the want of ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, according to the usage of the same Church: and whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers—

"Know all men, that I, John Wesley, think myself to be providentially called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And therefore, under the protection of almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart as a superintendent, by the imposition of my hands, and prayer, (being assisted by other ordained ministers,) Thomas Coke, doctor of civil law, a presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four

JOHN WESLEY."

Let us examine this instrument with care. The writer in the first place describes himself—not as a Bishop—not as claiming under any title whatever the right to ordain others, but a "*Presbyter of the Church of England*"—and therefore as a Presbyter of that Church most solemnly bound not to transcend the duties and obligations of his peculiar office. He then sets forth that "many of the people in the Southern Provinces of North America, desire to continue under his care,"—not that they wish to separate from him and form themselves into an independent Society or Church under any other individual, but that they wish to *continue under his care*. But more than this, that these people,

"still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the Ch. of England"—not that in consequence of any recent changes in the civil government of the country, they wish to change their religion—not that they have become dissatisfied with the Church of which they are members either as to its doctrine or discipline, nor that they are desirous of violating any of its regulations; but that they "still adhere to it," and this in spite of Revolutions and bloodshed, for these events though they may change the outward condition of the Church and affect its members, yet they cannot destroy it. The Methodists in America therefore did not then wish to separate, nor did Mr. Wesley intend that they should.

He then proceeds to say, that these people "are greatly distressed for the want of ministers to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper, according to the usage of the same Church"—not that they were distressed for the want of some individual to ordain their lay-preachers and act as Bishop among them, nor for the want of some individual to organize them into a separate and independent body, but the Revolution had unfortunately compelled most of the regularly ordained Clergymen of the Church of England, especially in the Southern Provinces to leave the country, (see Hawks' History) and these people in common with other members of the Church, were greatly distressed for the want of the Sacraments, which "according to the usage of the same Church," can only be administered by Clergymen Episcopally ordained.

Having set forth these facts, Mr. Wesley then proceeds to declare, that he "thinks himself providentially called to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America;"—not that he considered himself authorized to *ordain any one to the office of the Ministry, but providentially called upon*,—from the position which he occupied in the providence of God as the "Father of all the Methodists," *to set apart* some persons for the *work of the ministry in America*—to send over some of the regularly ordained Clergymen, belonging to his connexion and under his care, to feed these "sheep in the wilderness."

"And therefore under the protection of Almighty God and with

a single eye to his glory"—not being influenced by any sinister designs, not intending any thing more than is here expressed, "I have this day set apart as a Superintendent, by the imposition of my hands and prayer (being assisted by other ordained ministers) Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, a Presbyter of the Church of England," &c.—not that he had ordained Thomas Coke according to the Ordination Service of the Church of England, and admitted him to the order of a Bishop in the Church of God,—but that he had "*set him apart as a Superintendent,*" in a particular field of labor, where other ministers were to be sent, and where it was necessary that some one should act as *Superintendent*;—not that Superintendent and Bishop are the same thing, or convertible terms, for this is not the case. Every Bishop is in one sense a Superintendent indeed, but not every Superintendent a Bishop, for we have Superintendents of Societies, of Schools, of Colleges, &c. and yet in virtue of their office as Superintendents, it would be absurd for them to claim to be Bishops in the Christian Church.

Having thus examined this important document, the only one which can be regarded as a source of authority to Dr. Coke, I think we are fully authorized to draw the following conclusions:

1st. *That when this document was written, Mr. Wesley did not intend that the Methodists in this country should separate from the Church of England, nor did he think that they desired to do so.*

2d. *That when this document was written, Mr. Wesley had no design of establishing a new "Methodist Episcopal Church," in America, nor did he intend to do any thing more than to make some provision for the administration of the Sacraments to his people, and this "according to the usage of the Church of England," which had never been established here by law, and which as a pure branch of the Church of Christ could as well exist hereafter as before the Revolution.*

3d. *That Mr. Wesley did not then intend to ordain or consecrate Dr. Coke to any office whatever in the Christian ministry, but only to "set him apart as a Superintendent."*

4th. That *in virtue of the authority here conferred upon him*, Dr. Coke could not lawfully exercise the office of a Bishop in the Church of God.

VI. Now it will be remembered that this important document was signed on the 2d September, 1784, and if we should soon find another document written some days after, which *appears to* be inconsistent with this, the reader must not be alarmed; he must remember the age of the author, the person who is with him, the remark of one of the Preachers quoted by Dr. Whitehead about "inconsistencies," and more than all, he must let me assure him that there are still other documents which may ~~ex-~~plain the mysteries of this.

LETTER II.

"BRISTOL, September 10, 1784.

To Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our brethren in North America:—

By a very uncommon train of providences many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from the mother country, and erected into independent states. The English government has no power over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the states of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the provincial assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation some thousands of the inhabitants of those states desire my advice, and in compliance with their desire I have drawn up a little sketch.

Lord King's account of the primitive church convinced me many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling preachers. But I have refused: not only for peace' sake, but because I was determined, as little as possible, to violate the established order of the national Church, to which I belonged.

But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish minister: so that for some hundreds of miles together there is none either to baptize or administer the Lord's supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's supper. And I have prepared a liturgy, little differing from that of the Church of England, (I think the best constituted national church in the world,) which I advise all the travelling preachers to use on the Lord's day in all the congregations, reading the litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the elders to administer the supper of the Lord on every Lord's day.

If any one will point out a more rational and Scriptural way of feeding and guiding these poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

It has indeed been proposed to desire the English bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object, 1. I desired the bishop of London to ordain one, but could not prevail. 2. If they consented, we knew the slowness of their proceedinge: but the matter admits of no delay. 3. If they would ordain them now, they would expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us! 4. As our American brethren are now totally disentangled, both from the state and the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty, simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive churches. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free.

JOHN WESLEY.

Now after examining this document with care, we think we may be justified in drawing the following conclusions:

1st. That Mr. Wesley had "*drawn up a little sketch,*" which he considered applicable to the peculiar ecclesiastical condition of the people of these Provinces, and that this "*little sketch*" was not the same as the Liturgy which is afterwards mentioned; for he says, "*and I have prepared a Liturgy,*" &c.

2d. *That inasmuch as this "little sketch" has never been given to the world,* we have an undoubted right to conjecture what it contained; and that the conjecture which many have made, who have examined Mr. Wesley's political opinions, and who have considered what he says about the reasons for his sketch, that, "*no one either claims or exercisss any ecclesiastical authority at all,*"—may be true, viz., that the "*little sketch*" contained some plan for the exercise of "*Ecclesiastical authority*" over the inhabitants of these Provinces.

3d. That the Book of Lord King, and the freedom of these Provinces from Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, are here pleaded by Mr. Wesley, not in justification of any *ordination* of Dr. Coke, (for according to his opinion Dr. Coke had been made a Bishop when he was ordained a Presbyter,) but in justification of his *ordination* of "*travelling preachers*"—preachers not already ordained as Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey, and enabling them to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

4th. That there is nothing in this document which declares that Mr. Wesley had *ordained* Dr. Coke, but only that he had

"appointed him and Mr. Asbury joint Superintendents;" and that whatsoever office or power Mr. Wesley had conferred upon Dr. Coke, he had also conferred upon Mr. Asbury, who was then more than 3000 miles from him, and could not therefore have been ordained by him.

5th. That there is no declaration in this document that Mr. Wesley had even *ordained* Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey, but only that he had "appointed them to act as *Elders*"—an expression which he could scarcely have used had he been fully convinced that he had made them *really* Elders in the Church of God,—and we know as a matter of indisputable History that one of these gentlemen (Mr. Vasey) was so far from considering himself an Elder *in fact* by this appointment, that *he was afterwards ordained such in this country by Bishop White*.

6th. That so much of Mr. Wesley's advice as relates to the use of the Liturgy is plain and express, and that the Methodists in this country should be more careful to follow his plain and express directions than they are to adhere to those which, at best, are doubtful and inferential.

7th. That the reasons which Mr. Wesley gave, for not applying to the English Bishops for ordination are *apparently* good, but unsustained by the following facts:—1st. That the person whom Mr. Wesley desired the Bishop of London, Dr. Lowth, to ordain was a "preacher who wished to come over to this country as a Chaplain in Lord Cornwallis' Army," (see Andrews' Letter,) and therefore the refusal of the Bishop to ordain him, under those circumstances, did not imply his unwillingness to ordain under the circumstances of the present case, according to the advice of Mr. Fletcher. 2d. That the English Bishops have never claimed the right to govern those whom they ordained for this country.

8th. That Mr. Wesley did not intend this document to be used as evidence that he had ordained Dr. Coke a *Bishop*, or that he had directed him to ordain Mr. Asbury a *Bishop*, for all this would be utterly at variance with the letter which he afterwards sent to the latter; and finally that there is no such evidence of the intended ordination or consecration of Dr. Coke as

ought to be afforded in a case of so much importance, not only to the spiritual interest of men, but to the reputation and character of Mr. Wesley himself.

VII. I come now, therefore, to another branch of Testimony, viz., the confessions of Dr. Coke; and here, in order to bring this letter to a close as soon as possible, I shall submit the documents with but a few observations, not doubting that the reader will necessarily draw such conclusions as will sustain me in the position I have taken.

LETTER V.

Dr. Coke to Bishop White.

This letter is reprinted from Bishop White's Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal Church, first edition, pages 424 to 429.

RIGHT REV. SIR,

Permit me to intrude a little on your time upon a subject of great importance.

You, I believe, are conscious that I was brought up in the church of England, and have been ordained a presbyter of that church. For many years I was prejudiced, even I think to bigotry, in favor of it: but through a variety of causes or incidents, to mention which would be tedious and useless, my mind was exceedingly biased on the other side of the question. In consequence of this, I am not sure but I went farther in the separation of our church in America, than Mr. Wesley, from whom I had received my commission, did intend. He did indeed solemnly invest me, as far as he had a right so to do, with Episcopal authority, but did not intend, I think, that an entire separation should take place. He, being pressed by our friends on this side of the water for ministers to administer the sacraments to them, (there being very few clergy of the church of England then in the United States,) went farther, I am sure, than he would have gone, if he had foreseen some events which followed. And this I am certain of—that he is now sorry for the separation.

But what can be done for a re-union, which I much wish for; and to accomplish which Mr. Wesley, I have no doubt, would use his influence to the utmost? The affection of a very considerable number of the preachers, and most of the people, is very strong towards him, notwithstanding the excessive ill usage he received from a few. My interest also is not small; and both his and mine would readily aid to the utmost he used to accomplish that (to us) very desirable object; if a readiness were shown by the bishops of the protestant episcopal church to re-unite.

It is even to *your church* an object of great importance. We have now about 60,000 adults in our society in these states, and about 250 travelling ministers and preachers; besides a great number of local preachers, very far exceeding the number of travelling preachers; and some of those local preachers are men of very considerable abilities. But if we number the methodists as most people number the members of their church, viz. by the families which constantly attend the divine ordinances in their places of worship, they will make a larger body than you probably conceive. The society, I believe, may be safely multiplied by five on an average to give us our stated congregations; which will then amount to 300,000. And if the calculation which, I think, some eminent writers have made, be just; that three fifths of mankind are un-adult (if I may

use the expression) at any given period, it will follow that all the families, the adults of which form our congregations in these states, amount to 750,000. About one fifth of these are blacks. The work now extends in length from Boston to the south of Georgia; and in breadth from the Atlantic to lake Champlain, Vermont, Albany, Redstone, Holstein, Kentucky, Cumberland, &c.

But there are many hindrances in the way. Can they be removed?

1. Our ordained ministers will not, ought not, to give up their right of administering the sacraments. I don't think that the generality of them, perhaps none of them, would refuse to submit to a re-ordination, if other hindrances were removed out of the way. I must here observe that between 60 and 70 only out of the two hundred and fifty have been ordained presbyters, and about 60 deacons, (only.) The presbyters are the choicest of the whole.

2. The other preachers would hardly submit to a re-union, if the possibility of their rising up to ordination depended on the present bishops in America. Because though they are *all* I think I may say, zealous, pious and very useful men, yet they are not acquainted with the learned languages. Besides, they would argue,—If the present bishops would waive the article of the learned languages, yet their successors might not.

My desire of a re-union is so sincere and earnest that these difficulties almost make me tremble: and yet something must be done before the death of Mr. Wesley, otherwise I shall despair of success: for though my influence among the methodists in these states as well as in Europe is, I doubt not, increasing, yet Mr. Asbury, whose influence is very capital, will not easily comply: nay, I know he will be exceedingly averse to it.

In Europe, where some steps had been taken, tending to a separation, all is at an end. Mr. Wesley is a determined enemy to it, and I have lately borne an open and successful testimony against it.

Shall I be favored with a private interview with you in Philadelphia? I shall be there, God willing, on Tuesday, the 17th of May. If this be agreeable, I'll beg of you just to signify it in a note directed to me, at Mr. Jacob Baker's, merchant, Market street, Philadelphia: or, if you please, by a few lines sent to me by the return of the post at Philip Rogers, Esq. in Baltimore, from yourself or Dr. Magaw, and I will wait upon you with my friend Dr. Magaw. We can then enlarge on these subjects.

I am conscious of it, that secrecy is of great importance in the present state of the business, till the minds of you, your brother bishops, and Mr. Wesley, be circumstantially known. I must therefore beg that these things be confined to yourself and Dr. Magaw, till I have the honor of seeing you.

Thus, you see, I have made a bold venture on your honor and candor, and have opened my whole heart to you on the subject as far as the extent of a small letter will allow me. If you put equal confidence in me, you will find me candid and faithful.

I have, notwithstanding, been guilty of inadvertencies. Very lately I found myself obliged (for the pacifying of my conscience) to write a penitential letter to the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, which gave him great satisfaction: and for the same reason I must write another to the Rev. Mr. Pettigrew. When I was last in America, I prepared and corrected a great variety of things for our magazines, indeed almost every thing that was printed, except some loose hints which I had taken of one of my journeys, and which I left in my hurry with Mr. Asbury, without any correction, entreating that no part of them might be printed which would be improper or offensive. But through great inadvertency (I suppose) he suffered some reflections on the characters of the two above-mentioned gentlemen to be inserted in the magazine, for which I am very sorry: and probably shall not rest till I have made my acknowledgement more public; though Mr. Jarratt does not desire it.

I am not sure whether I have not also offended you, sir, by accepting of one of the offers made me by you and Dr. Magaw of the use of your churches about six years ago on my first visit to Philadelphia, without informing you of our plan of separation from the church of England. If I did offend, (as I doubt I did, especially from what you said on the subject to Mr. Richard Dallam, of Abington,) I sincerely beg yours and Dr. Magaw's pardon. I'll endeavor to amend. But, alas! I am a frail, weak creature.

I will intrude no longer at present. One thing only I will claim from your candor—that if you have no thoughts of improving this proposal, you will burn this letter, and take no more notice of it (for it would be a pity to have us entirely alienated from each other, if we cannot unite in the manner my ardent wishes desire.) But if you will further negotiate the business, I will explain my mind still more fully to you on the probabilities of success.

In the meantime permit me, with great respect, to subscribe myself,
Right Rev. sir, Your very humble servant in Christ,

THOMAS COKE.

Richmond, April 24, 1791.

The Right Rev. Father in God, Bishop White.

You must excuse interlineations, &c. as I am just going into the country, and have no time to transcribe.

This letter was given to the public in 1804, in consequence of a denial of the fact of such application, by the Methodists in Maryland.

In this letter Dr. Coke expressly acknowledges, that he "went farther in the separation of our Church in America than Mr. Wesley, from whom he had received his commission, did intend"—that "Mr. Wesley himself went farther than he would have gone, if he had foreseen some events which followed"—that "the generality of the ordained ministers, *perhaps none of them*, would refuse to submit to a *reordination*," and he speaks of himself only as a "Presbyter of the Church of England," though he says, that Mr. Wesley "did indeed invest him, *as far as he had a right to do, with Episcopal authority.*"

In the Memoirs of the Church, Bishop White has recorded the following facts as having taken place at an interview with Dr. Coke some time after the above communication—that "Dr. Coke read a letter which he had written to Bishop Seabury, similar to that which he had written to the author; but with the difference of his suggesting to Bishop Seabury as follows—That although the Methodists would have confidence in any engagements, which should be made by the present Bishops; yet there might in future be some, who on the arrival of their inferior grades of preachers

ers to a competency to the ministry, would not admit them as proposed in the letter—that to guard against the danger of this, *there would be use in consecrating Mr. Asbury to the Episcopacy*—and that although there would not be the same reasons in his (Dr. Coke's case) because he was a resident of England; *yet as he should probably, while he lived, occasionally visit America, it would not be fit, considering he was Mr. Asbury's senior, that he should appear in a lower character than this gentleman.* These were, in substance, the sentiments he expressed; and on reading this part of the letter, he desired the author to take notice, that he did not make a *condition of what he had there written.*" (See Bishop White's Memoirs, p. 170.)

What an extraordinary state of things is here unfolded! Can it be that Dr. Coke really believed that he had consecrated **Mr. Asbury** a Bishop? Can it be that he felt himself to be a Bishop in virtue of any authority which he had received from Mr. Wesley? Is there any sensible man who can read this statement, without perceiving that it contains a full confession on the part of Dr. Coke, and, (so far as he represented Mr. Asbury) of **Mr. Asbury**, that neither of these Gentlemen looked upon themselves as genuine Bishops in the Church of God; such Bishops as had been truly and validly consecrated to that high and holy office.

But here is another letter of Dr. Coke's taken from the correspondence of Mr. William Wilberforce, the well known Philanthropist.

LETTER VI.

Rev. Dr. Coke to Wm. Wilberforce, Esq.

At Samuel Hague's, Esq. }
Leeds, April 14, 1813. }

Dear and highly respected Sir:—

A subject which appears to me of great moment lies much upon my mind; and yet it is a subject of such a delicate nature, that I cannot venture to open my mind upon it to any one, of whose candor, piety, delicacy, and honor, I have not the highest opinion. such a character I do indubitably esteem you, sir; and as such, I will run the risk of opening my whole heart to you upon the point.

For at least twelve years, sir, the interests of our Indian Empire have lain very near my heart. In several instances I have made attempts to open a way for missions in that country, and even for my going over there myself. But every thing proved abortive.

The prominent desire of my soul, even from my infancy, (I may almost say,) has been to be useful. Even when I was a Deist for part of my time at Oxford, (what a miracle of grace!) usefulness was my most darling object. The Lord has been pleased to fix me for about thirty-seven years on a point of great usefulness. My influence in the large Wesleyan connexion, the introduction and superintendence of our missions in different parts of the globe, and the wide sphere opened to me for the preaching of the Gospel to almost innumerable large and attentive congregations, have opened to me a very extensive field for usefulness. And yet I could give up all for India. Could I but close my life in being the means of raising a spiritual Church in India, it would satisfy the utmost ambition of my soul here below.

I am not so much wanted in our connexion at home as I once was. Our committee of privileges, as we term it, can watch over the interests of the body, in respect to laws and government as well in my absence as if I was with them. Our missionary committee in London can do the same in respect to missions; and my absence would only make them feel their duty more incumbent upon them.—Auxiliary committees through the nation (which we have now in contemplation) will amply supply my place, in respect to raising money. There is nothing to influence me much against going to India, but my extensive sphere for preaching the Gospel. But this I do assure you, sir, sinks considerably in my calculation, in comparison of the high honor (if the Lord was to confer it upon me in His Providence and grace) of beginning or reviving a genuine work of religion in the immense regions of Asia.

Impressed with these views, I wrote a letter about a fortnight ago to the Earl of Liverpool. I have either mislaid the copy of it, or destroyed it at the time, for fear of its falling into improper hands. After an introduction, drawn up in the most delicate manner in my power, I took notice of the observations made by Lord Castlereagh in the House of Commons, concerning a religious establishment in India connected with the established church at home. I then simply opened my situation in the Wesleyan connexion, as I have stated it to you, sir, above. I enlarged on the earnest desire I had of closing my life in India, ob-

serving that if his Royal Highness the Prince Regent and the government should think proper to appoint me their Bishop in India, I should most cheerfully and most gratefully accept the offer, I am sorry I have lost the copy of the letter. In my letter to Lord Liverpool, I observed, that I should, in case of my appointment to the Episcopacy of India, return most fully and faithfully into the bosom of the established Church, and do every thing in my power to promote its interest, and would submit to all such restrictions in the fulfilment of my office, as the government and the bench of bishops at home should think necessary—that my prime motive was to be useful to the Europeans in India; and that my second (though not the least) was to introduce the Christian religion among the Hindoos by the preaching of the Gospel, and perhaps also, by the establishment of schools.

I have not, sir, received an answer. Did I think that the answer was withheld, because Lord Liverpool considered me as acting very improperly by making the request, I should take no further step in the business. This may be the case; but his Lodship's silence may arise from other motives; on the one hand, because he did not choose to send me an absolute refusal; and, on the other hand, because he did not see it proper, at least just now, to give me any encouragement. When I was in some doubt this morning whether I ought to take the liberty of writing to you, my mind became determined on my being informed about three hours ago, that in a letter received from you by Mr. Hey, you observed that the generality of the House of Commons were set against granting any thing of an imperative kind to the Dissenters or Methodists in favor of sending missionaries to India. Probably I may err in respect to the exact words which you used.

I am not conscious, my dear respected sir, that the least degree of ambition influences me in this business. I possess a fortune of about 1200*l*, a-year, which is sufficient to bear my traveliing expenses, and to enable me to make many charitable donations. I have lost two dear wives, and am now a widower. Our leading friends throughout the connexion receive me and treat me with the utmost respect and hospitality. I am quite surrounded with friends who greatly love me; but India still cleaves to my heart. I sincerely believe that my strong inclination to spend the remainder of my life in India originates in the Divine Will, whilst I am called upon to use the secondary means to obtain the end.

I have formed an intimate acquaintance with Dr. Buchanan, and have written to him to inform him that I shall make him a

visit within a few days, if it be convenient.—From his house I intend, *Deo volente*, to return to Leeds, for a day, and then to set off next week for London. The latter end of last November I visited him before, at Moat Hill, his place of residence, and a most pleasant visit it was to me, and also to him I have reason to think. He has been, since I saw him, drinking of the same bitter cup of which I have been drinking, by the loss of a beloved wife.

I would just observe, sir, that a hot climate peculiarly agrees with me. I was never better in my life than in the West Indies during the four visits I made to that archipelago, and should now prefer the torrid zone, as a climate, to any other part of the world. Indeed, I enjoy in this country, though sixty-five years of age, such an uninterrupted flow of health and strength as astonishes all my acquaintance. They commonly observe that they have perceived no difference in me for these last twenty years.

I would observe, sir, as I did at the commencement of my letter, that I throw myself on your candor, piety, and honor. If I do not succeed in my views of India, and it were known among the preachers that I had been taking, (though from a persuasion that I am in the Divine Will in so doing,) it might more or less affect my usefulness in the vineyard of my Lord, and that would very much afflict me. And yet, notwithstanding this, I cannot satisfy myself without making some advances in the business. I consider sir, your brother-in-law, Mr. Stephen, to be a man of eminent worth. I have a very high esteem for him. I know that his yea is yea, and what he promises he certainly will perform. Without some promise of confidence he might (if he were acquainted with the present business) mention it to M. ——, with whom, I know, Mr. Stephen is acquainted. If Mr. —— were acquainted with the steps I am taking, he would, I am nearly sure, call immediately a meeting of our committee of privileges, and the consequence might be favorable to my influence, and consequently to my usefulness among the Methodists. But my mind must be eased. I must venture this letter, and leave the whole to God, and under Him, sir, to you.

I have reason to believe that Lord Eldon had, (indeed I am sure of it,) and probably now has an esteem for me. Lord Castlereagh once expressed to Mr. Alexander Knox, then his private secretary in Ireland, his very high regard for me: since that time I have had one interview with his lordship in London. I have been favored on various occasions with public and private interviews with Lord Bathurst. I shall be glad to have your advice

whether I should write letters to those noblemen, particularly to the two first, on the present subject; or whether I had not better suspend every thing, and have the pleasure of seeing you in London. I hope I shall have that honor. I shall be glad to receive three or four lines from you, (don't write unless you think it may be of some immediate importance,) signifying that I may wait on you immediately on my arrival in London.

I have the honor to be, with very high respect,

My dear Sir, your very much obliged,

very humble, and very faithful servant,

T. COKE.

VIII. I come now to the *character* of Dr. Coke. In the Methodist Book of Discipline is the following declaration, that the Rev. John Wesley, "preferring the Episcopal mode of government to any other, solemnly set apart, by the imposition of his hands and prayer, Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, late of Jesus College in the University of Oxford, and a Presbyter of the Church of England, for the *Episcopal office*." Of this declaration, by which thousands have been deceived, Dr. Coke was the author, and hence the question arises, was he a man whose testimony in this matter can be relied upon without doubt?

This is a proper subject of inquiry, and one about which it is absolutely necessary for us to be satisfied, before we can justly be called upon to give our assent to the above mentioned declaration. Now, in answer to the question I shall present the following facts, and leave the reader to form his own estimate of the Doctor's character.

In his sermon at the ordination of Mr. Asbury, "he began his defence by the most severe censures on the Church of England," and yet in a letter to Mr. Wesley, he declared that "he would as soon commit adultery as to preach against the Church."

For the use of the Methodists in this country, he wrote the following which is published in some of the older books of Discipline,—"We are thoroughly convinced that the Church of England, to which we have been united, is deficient in several of the most important parts of christian discipline, and that (a few ministers and members excepted) it has lost the life and power of

religion. We are not ignorant of the spirit and designs it has ever discovered in Europe of rising to pre-eminence and worldly dignity by virtue of a national establishment, and by the most servile devotion to the will of temporal governors; and we fear the same spirit will lead the same Church in these United States, (*though altered in its name,*) to similar designs and attempts." And yet this same Dr. Coke, not only applied for admission into "this same Church in these U. S.", but in a letter to Mr. Wilberforce written in 1790, about the same time with the above, he said "There is one point I feel desirous of touching upon, assured that your candor will excuse my further intrusion on your patience. Some have said (from the steps I was unavoidably necessitated to take on the continent of America) that I would, if possible, separate the whole Methodist connection in England from the established Church. I do assure you, sir, upon the honor of a gentleman, and (which is in my view, and also I am confident, in yours, absolutely greater,) on the solemn word of a christian, that the assertion is utterly false. I not only wish for no such thing, but would oppose a separation from the *establishment* with my utmost influence, even if that, or a division of the connection was the unavoidable alternative." So much for the Doctor's consistency.

IX. Now for the fact that he claimed a number of things which did not really belong to him. From the introduction to Dr. Adam Clark's Commentary we learn, that he claimed to be the author of Dodd's Commentary, which he was not. From the "Life of Mr. Samuel Drew," we learn that he employed Mr. Drew for a pecuniary compensation, to write for him, and that "of the following works bearing the name of Thomas Coke, L. L. D., Mr. Drew was virtually and principally the author:"

"A Commentary on the New Testament," 2 vol. 4 to. 1807.
"The Recent Occurrences of Europe, considered in relation to Prophecies fulfilled and unfulfilled," 1808.

"A History of the West Indies, Natural, Civil and Ecclesiastical, with an account of the Missions instituted in those Islands," 3 vol., 1803 to 1811. "Six Letters in reply to the Rev. Melville

now Mr. Coke may have been
on account of his claim
Dr. Coke is the author

Horn, in defence of the Doctrines of Justification by faith, and the Witness of the Spirit, 1810.

"The Cottager's Bible, containing a short Exposition and Practical Reflections on each chapter." 4 vol. 1710. See Life of Samuel Drew, by his Son, p. 327. So much for the Doctor's honesty.

X. Now for Dr. Whitehead's description of his character. Expressing his regret that Mr. Fletcher did not accept Mr. Wesley's proposal to appoint him his successor, Dr. Whitehead remarks, "He," Mr. Fletcher, "would have done much good while he lived, and have prevented many of the evils which have since taken place. He would at least have prevented the influence which a person" (Dr. Coke named in the Index) "some years afterwards acquired in the connexion, with talents very inferior to most of the preachers; who has been the chief means of introducing innovations into the *original plan of Methodism*, which have already produced much mischief, and threaten much more in the issue; and whose rash and inconsistent conduct, on several occasions, has brought the whole body of preachers into disgrace, and embarrassed them with many difficulties," vol. 2. p. 356. So much for the Doctor's general reputation.

XI. Now for his management with Mr. Wesley and his influence over him.

"In the latter end of the summer preceding Mr. Wesley's death, a certain person" (Dr. Coke named in the Index) "who had long been trying various schemes to acquire a superior influence over both preachers and people, endeavored to persuade Mr. Wesley, that if he disposed of his literary property by his will only, his next of kin would claim it; that a deed of assignment was necessary to prevent their claims. Mr. Wesley denied that this would be the case, and resisted the proposition of making a deed of assignment. Being, however, frequently worried on the occasion, he at length, in company with this same person, applied to his confidential solicitor on the question; who told him that his literary property was personal estate, his will was a competent instrument to convey, and that no Deed of assignment was necessary. The party who wished for a Deed of assignment that might an-

swer his purpose, was not discouraged by this response, but afterwards wrote to the same Solicitor, for his further opinion on the subject, and received the same answer in writing. Finding Mr. Wesley's Solicitor not of an accommodating disposition, whose integrity must be sacrificed, he applied to another, a total stranger to the methodist economy, and therefore wrote under his direction. A deed of assignment was drawn up to answer the purpose intended. Things being thus prepared, the old gentleman was carried privately to a friend's house, to execute this deed, five months before he died; a time when his weakness was so great, we may venture to say, he could not sit five minutes to hear any thing read, especially in the forms of law, without falling into a doze; so that there is not the least probability that Mr. Wesley knew the contents of the deed he executed, or had any suspicion of its tendency or of the design of its author. It is very certain that the body of the preachers were ignorant of this scandalous transaction, in which an advantage was taken of age and infirmities, by one or two individuals, to gain the management of a large and increasing annual revenue to serve the purposes of their own ambition." Vol. 2. p. 463. So much for the Doctor's management with Mr. Wesley.

XII. Now, although this mass of strange and extraordinary facts, is calculated in some respects to confuse the mind, and to confirm the declaration of the Preacher quoted by Dr. Whitehead, who called this "Methodist Episcopacy a hodge podge of inconsistencies," still I think, the following conclusions must be drawn:

1st. That however much Mr. Wesley may have departed from the principles and practice of his former life, still he never intended that the Methodists in this country should separate entirely from the Church.

2nd. That although he *may* have assumed the Episcopal office and ordained Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey, and authorized them to administer the sacraments, still he never intended to be understood as having pretended to *ordain* Dr. Coke, but only to appoint him a Superintendent and a joint Superintendent with Mr. Asbury, and both under him as the "Father of the family."

3rd. That if he was really convinced that "Bishop and Presbyter was the same order," then he could not have intended to ordain Dr. Coke, who according to this theory, was already a Bishop, and consequently his justification on this ground was intended to apply to the case of Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey.

4th. That whatever may have been his convictions as to Bishop and Presbyter, still in his letter to Mr. Asbury he most positively denied the identity of *Bishop* and *Superintendent*.

5th. That the confessions of Dr. Coke are abundantly sufficient to show that, whatever may have been his pretensions among the Methodists, still he never really believed that he was a validly consecrated Bishop in the Church of God.

6th. That the character of Dr. Coke was such as to lead us to believe, not only that he had "exceeded the authority given him by Mr. Wesley," as he expressly acknowledged, but that he claimed to be more than Mr. Wesley ever intended,—and finally, whatever may be our convictions as to the origin and claims of Methodist Episcopacy, still it is proved beyond all contradiction that there is no *good* and *sufficient reason* to believe that Mr. Wesley ever intended to consecrate Dr. Coke a Bishop. Quod erat demonstrandum.

DEAR SIR—I know not how it would be possible for me to make to you a fairer proposition, than that you should communicate the substance of your Lectures against the Church, so as to give me the opportunity of examining the arguments which you employed. Having delivered those Lectures in public, I should naturally suppose, that you were careful not to make any assertions which you could not substantiate; and your compliance with my proposition, would not only enable you to give them a more permanent and lasting form, but you could fortify your arguments by any replies which you might choose to make to my objections. However as you have been pleased to decline that proposition, and to turn me over to Dr. Bangs, I intend in this letter to examine some of the prominent arguments of his book; and those who heard your Lectures can judge whether *his* arguments are in any respect the same as those, which were employed by you.

I. Dr. Bangs informs us that “the Methodist Ep. Church was organized before the Protestant Episcopal Church had an existence,” (p. 26.) A Methodist writer somewhat earlier than Dr. Bangs, has made a discovery still greater than this; for, after speaking of the Presbyterians, Baptists, Lutherans, Dutch Reformed and Quakers as organized societies in *Europe* before the Revolution, and intimating that they were consequently dissolved in this country by that event, he then comes to the sage conclusion, that the Methodist E. Church not only preceded the *Episcopal*, but was “*the first that was organized on the American continent.*”* All this is said for the purpose of rejecting, with becoming indignation, the charge that the Methodists have separated from the Church; and no doubt it has quieted the mind of many a brother whose conscience has been troubled by the sin of schism. But what must a man think of the intelligence

* *Rise and Progress of the Methodist Church*, p. 314.

of his readers who will venture upon such assertions as these? What would be thought of the Lawyer who should attempt to wrest from some of our Churches the property which was given to them *before* the Revolution, on the ground that *that* event and the changes consequent in their organization, had destroyed their identity? What must we think of the Divine who betrays such an utter ignorance of the true nature of the Christian Church, as to imagine that it can be so easily destroyed?

"Where was your church before the consecration of Bishop Seabury or Bishop White, or before the American Revolution?" How very like the question which was sometimes addressed to the Reformers—"Where was your church before Cranmer?" But the Reformers found no difficulty in answering the question. Nay, they were glad of the opportunity not only of pointing to the time when the Church existed in England entirely free from papal corruptions, but of proving that the Reformation was no more the birth day of the Church than it was the creation of the world. And so we answer to all such miserable and "ad captandum" arguments, and tell you that you might as well talk about the discovery of the American continent at the time of the Revolution, as to talk about the establishment of the Church in this country *then*.

Previous to the Revolution, the Church in this country was under the Episcopal supervision of the Bishop of London; but immediately after that event, arrangements were made for procuring an independent episcopate, and for that purpose the Diocese of Connecticut had organized and elected the Rev. Samuel Seabury, D. D. their Bishop, who was consecrated in Scotland on the 14th of November 1784—more than a month before the organization of a Methodist Episcopal Church at Baltimore. But enough upon such a point as this.

II. The next argument of Dr. Bangs which I shall notice, is this, "*The terms Bishop and Presbyter or Elder, signified in the primitive Church, the same order of ministers,*" p. 38. This position lies at the foundation of his work; from it he draws his other conclusions on the right of ordination; by it he defends Mr.

Wesley, and attempts to overthrow the present position of the Episcopal Church; and in his complete success in establishing this position, he seems to glory as with the triumphs of victory. Having laid down this position, the author enters upon a long and learned argument to prove it; examining the etymology of the word "*Bishop*;" taking up those passages of Scripture in which it is used synonomously with Presbyter or Elder; quoting from Clemens Romanus, Polycarp, Irenæus, Cyprian and Jerome, among the ancients—from Cranmer, Cox, Mann, Stillingleet, Bishop White and others among the moderns,—and he then concludes on the 87th page, that "he shall here rest the question respecting the identity of Bishops and Elders or Presbyters, having fully sustained his position

- 1st, From the Scriptures,
- 2nd, From the Primitive Fathers,
- 3rd, From the most respectable ecclesiastical writers in
in the English Church,
- 4th, From the testimony of Bichop White," &c.

Now the truth is, the learned Doctor might have spared himself the trouble of so long an argument in proof of his position; for if he had said at once, that every Episcopal writer without exception, and every other individual who knows any thing at all about the Scriptures or the Primitive Church, all admit his fundamental position, and have never presumed to question it, then, certainly, he would have hit the thing exactly. For strange as it may seem to the reader who is unacquainted with the real question at issue, and the grounds of the Episcopal Church, this is so—all admit the Doctor's fundamental position. What says Mr. Chapman? "We attach no importance whatever, to mere names, it is the office and the duties appertaining to that office about which we are alone solicitous. At the very time when according to the Scriptures, Bishop and Presbyter were convertible terms, and designated the same individual minister, there existed the lower order of deacons and the higher order of Apostles; and it is for this three fold ministry that we contend, and not for the names by which it was at any time distinguished. If it could

be shown that Apostles were not superior to the then second order of bishops or presbyters, there would indeed be some foundation for the argument, but their superiority being universally acknowledged, it falls to the ground, being only calculated to gratify the subtle disputant on the one hand, and to secure the credulous proselyte on the other."

"While we accede, therefore, to this interchangeable use of the words, bishop and presbyter, in the Scriptures, we fearlessly and confidently assert, that it ended with the Apostolic age, and was not afterwards employed by the primitive christians.

Not only does Eusebius, the historian say, "*Those very persons were called Apostles, whom by usage of speech the Church now calls bishops;*"—but the celebrated Theodoret, has furnished us with the following just solution of this merely apparent difficulty —"The same persons were anciently called presbyters and bishops, and those now called bishops were called Apostles; but in process of time, the name of Apostle was left for those who were truly Apostles, and the name of bishop was restrained to those who were actually called Apostles; thus Epaphroditus was the Apostle of the Philippians, Titus of the Cretans and Timothy of the Asiatics."

"A more triumphant vindication of Episcopacy cannot be imagined. They who succeeded to the apostolic office, out of reverence to such of their predecessors as were immediately called by Christ, appear to have relinquished to them the more dignified title of Apostle, and to have appropriated to themselves the humbler name of Bishop, originally bestowed upon the second order of the ministry in common with that of Presbyter; but thenceforward exclusively attached to the first and never afterwards resumed by the second. The change was only in name, the two offices, or orders, remained as separate and distinct as they were before. It was precisely as if by the common consent of the American people, springing from gratitude for the services and veneration for the memory of Washington, it should be determined for the future to appropriate to him alone, the title of President, and to all his successors in the presidential *office* crea-

ted by the Constitution, what is now regarded as the less dignified name of Governor. It would not abstract one iota from the constitutional privileges and powers attached to the office itself. Its incumbent would still superintend and govern as he now superintends and governs; and he would be considered the merest trifler, who should have the folly to assert, that a change of names had produced a material change in official rank and authority." (Chapman's Sermons, p p. 77—78.)

Here, then, Dr. Bangs might have found a complete answer to all the conclusions drawn by him from the interchangeable use in the Scriptures, of the names Bishop and Presbyter, and not only here, but in every work on the subject of Episcopacy, by the writers of the Church, this fact is allowed, and fully explained to have no connection whatever with the true question at issue.

"In support of this view of the subject," says Dr. Bangs, "we refer the reader to Acts xx, 17, 23, where St. Paul addresses himself to the *Episkopoi*, which are called in our translation *elders* in verse 17, and *overseers* [Bishops] in verse 20, a proof this, that these men had the oversight of the church at that time, and that there were a plurality of them in the city of Ephesus. They could not, therefore, have been diocesan Bishops, unless we absurdly suppose that there were several dioceses in one city. Hence it follows most conclusively, that those denominated *Elders* or *Presbyters* were the same as those denominated *Bishops*," p. 39.

Now, all this is very true—these men whom the Apostle assembled were indeed all *elders* or *presbyters* or *bishops*—they were all connected with the Church in the large city of Ephesus, and consequently were not *diocesan Bishops* in the present sense; but does all this prove that there was no order in the ministry superior to them,—that they were not subject to some kind of a diocesan bishop? for what was the apostle himself who had assembled them together and given them his charge, and what was Timothy who was afterwards placed over them as their Apostle, or as we should now say, their bishop? In this very passage then, if the learned Doctor had been looking for things instead of

names, he might have found two orders in the christian ministry entirely separate and distinct from each other in authority; and then if he had turned back to Acts 6, he might have found another order entirely distinct from either of these two, and there denominated *deacons*. What would we think of the man who should gravely attempt to prove that all the Presidents in the United States held the same office because they all possess the same general name; or that all the Judges in the county belong to the same rank and possess the same authority for a similar reason?

Can the Doctor prove that the higher office held at first by the twelve Apostles, and which all must acknowledge was entirely distinct from either or any of the others—can he prove that this office was not continued in the christian church and was not intended to be continued so long as the Church shall exist? “That’s the question.” Not a question of names, but a question relating to one of the most important *facts* which can occupy the attention of the christian, especially at the present time, when so many are striving to rend into pieces the seamless garment of Christ. Episcopilians believe,—and a great majority of the christian church are with us in this belief, and the whole christian world, as we think, for fifteen centuries—that the *office* held by the Apostles has been continued and is possessed by those whom we now call bishops, and for this faith we are ready to give a reason to every man that asketh, “with meekness and fear.” Do you tell us that this is mere assumption—a lordly and arrogant claim? As well might you tell the christian who believes that he has been brought out of darkness into God’s marvellous light, that from a stranger and an outcast he has been made a fellow-citizen with the saints and of the household of God, that it is all assumption, a lordly and an arrogant claim,—for he has the sure word of God for the foundation of his faith, *and so have we*. We point you to the Saviour’s promise, when that office was created and its ministers commissioned—“*Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world,*” and we tell you that we find in this promise a pledge of perpetuity which no sim-

every believer is able to gainsay, and which evidently refers, not to the Apostles as individuals, as mere men, but as *officers* in the Christian church who were to live by themselves and their successors until the end of the world. We tell you, too, that the commission which was bestowed upon the Apostles, conferred the power, and consequently enjoined the duty on their part, of bestowing the same commission upon others, for the Saviour said, "*as my Father hath sent me, even so, send I you;*" and when you look at this declaration in connection with the very act in which the Saviour was then engaged, you must perceive that it could import nothing less than this—as my Father hath sent me with power and authority to commission you, *even so send I you*, with power and authority to commission others. Here all boasting is excluded. The Saviour himself, not presuming to *take* this office, but acting as one sent and holding a commission, and so the Apostles likewise and their successors after them, and all that God alone may be glorified as the only source of ministerial authority and power.

But more than this, we point you to the divinely recorded fact that this office *was* continued; that one of the first acts of the Apostles after the Savior's Ascension was to commission Matthias, by elevating him from the inferior rank of the seventy to that of an Apostle;—and although to get rid of the difficulties in this case, you may imagine with Dr. Bangs and a few others, that the Apostles here transcended their authority, and that to reprove them for it, the Savior afterwards appointed St. Paul, yet we reply to you that this is an unfounded suggestion, a species of infidelity, which denies the plenary inspiration of the Apostles, and which allows their most solemn acts to be received or rejected according to the fancies of men. And we tell you moreover that we have much more reason to believe that the immediate appointment of St. Paul to the same office, was rather intended to teach them that their number should not be confined to twelve, as they might perhaps have supposed, but that they should go on in the appointment of others as the Church increased. At all events we find that so far from regarding the appointment of St. Paul

as a reproof, they did go on in the appointment of others, to the same rank and Apostleship. Such were Barnabas and Sylvanus, Timothy and Epaphroditus, Titus and James the Just, all not only called Apostles but exercising the peculiar duties of that office; and to so many had the number increased, that in the year 96, when the Revelations of St. John were written, some were "*false Apostles*," men who pretended to hold this office without authority—a fact which not only proves that the office was continued, but that something more was necessary to entitle a man to it than his own fancy or unfounded assertions.

And although from the necessities of the case, these Apostles had no distinct charge or settled Dioceses at first, as the Christians themselves had no established houses of worship or settled habitations, yet we find that these external regulations were all attended to, long before the close of the Apostolic age, as Timothy became settled over the Churches of Ephesus, Titus over those of Crete, James over those of Jerusalem, and Epaphroditus over those of Philippi. All these are incontestible proofs from the Scriptures, that the Apostolic office was continued in the Church—and when we remember that from the very nature of the case no *detailed* account of its organization could be expected in the Apostolic writings as well from their historical brevity as from the fact that they were all addressed to the members of the Church with whom its organization must have been familiar, the evidence which is here afforded is more than sufficient to satisfy an ingenuous mind.

But as it is not my intention to enter into any extended argument on this subject, but only to notice the prominent objections of Dr. Bangs, and incidentally to throw out suggestions which may lead the reader to investigate the treatises on the subject, I must now pass on to another point.

III. "Having proved that Bishops and Presbyters were the same order of ministers in the primitive church," says the learned Doctor, "it remains for us to inquire into the powers possessed by them;" and then he proceeds to show that they possessed the power of *ordination*.

1st, From Acts 13: 1—3.

2nd, From I Timothy. 4: 4.

3rd, From the example of the Church at Alexandria.

Now, before examining the instances here given of Presbyter ordination, as the Doctor supposes, I will briefly state the opinion of Episcopalian upon this subject, and this *without a single exception* among our Clergy, so far as I am acquainted.

All believe that the commission to ordain others was given to the Apostles alone, and that they alone, and their successors in that office in the primitive church exercised the right; that no instance of Presbyter ordination can be found in the Scriptures—that no *attempt* of the kind was ever made before the third century; that every such ordination was then declared null and void, and that on this subject up to the time of the Reformation, there is an unbroken chain of testimony. Thus, in 324 the Council of all the Egyptian bishops assembled at Alexandria under Hosius, declared null and void the ordinations performed by Colluthus, a presbyter of Alexandria, who had separated from his bishop and pretended to act as a bishop himself." (Athanasius t. 1st. p. 193.) Thus, in the first Council of Seville, so decided was the opinion of the church and so great was the danger felt to be, of *any* departure from the established mode of ordaining, that the ordinations performed by the bishop of Agaba were declared null, because an assisting Presbyter was accustomed to read the prayer of ordination on account of the bishop's blindness, who, however, laid his hands on those who were to be ordained. Thus Jerome in the 4th century, a Presbyter, who went farther than any other ancient writer whatever, in identifying the offices of the Bishop or Apostle and Presbyter, and who is sometimes quoted as authority for ministerial parity, yet in his utmost zeal to elevate the office of presbyter, he expressly acknowledges to the former the sole prerogative of ordination—"What does a Bishop do," says he, "which a Presbyter may not do, *excepting* ordination."*

These are only a few instances of the historical facts bearing

* See Palmer on the Church, vol. 2, p 414.
Chapin's Primitive Church, p 200

upon this subject; and Episcopalians, therefore, are *all united in their belief as to the proper and authorized minister of ordination*—that this right belongs to the highest order, the bishop now, since the change merely in name, the Apostle then, in the primitive church.

At the same time there are some who think, perhaps, that ordinations performed by Presbyters *may be valid in cases of absolute necessity*; there are some who think that it is unnecessary for us to affirm positively, that ordinations performed by Presbyters are really *invalid*, but by far the greater number believe that on this subject as well as on others, we should fearlessly declare the truth, as we believe it to be revealed, let the consequences be what they may, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear.

Now there is no dispute as to the fact that the Apostles and their successors held and exercised the right of ordination. Thus Paul and Barnabas ordained presbyters in every Church. Timothy and Titus were left at Ephesus and Crete to set things in order and to ordain presbyters in every church. The seven deacons were elected by the people, but ordained by the Apostles. Here, then, all are agreed, and the only question to be considered is, did the presbyters or elders exercise the same right? No one has ever pretended that any express authority was given to them for that purpose as it was given to the Apostles, but did they exercise it? Dr. Bangs says they did; and appeals,

1st, To Acts 13; 1—3. “Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.” On this passage Dr. Bangs remarks as follows:—“From the whole, *therefore*, I conclude that St. Paul received his credentials as an accredited minister in this presbyterial College at Antioch, from the hands

of men over whom he afterwards exercised a spiritual jurisdiction; and *therefore* a body of elders, or of "prophets and teachers," may impart authority to an equal to become their superior in office. This, *therefore*, as I have before remarked, is so far from being an unusual thing, that it occurred, as it seems, in the present case, at the very foundation of the christian Church. But the fact more especially established in the passage before us is, that the ordination was originally in the body of Presbyters, else these usurped that which did not belong to them."

Now, in answer to all this sage reasoning and multiplication of "therefores," we say that the learned Doctor ought to have proved, 1st. That the transaction here recorded was an ordination; 2nd, That the ordinators were mere Presbyters; 3rd, That St. Paul was not already an Apostle, and that an Apostle might be *re*-ordained by a company of inferior officers.

But neither of these things can be proved; for 1st, The transaction was not an ordination, as the reader has seen in my previous letter was the opinion of Mr. Wesley, and as every individual may see who will open his Bible and read both the 13th and 14th chapters together,—he will there find that Paul and Barnabas went on a special mission to various places, and at the conclusion of the narrative it is said, "and after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia; and when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia; *and thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God, for the work which they fulfilled.*" Here, then, we find that the work of the ministry for which they had been *ordained* according to Dr. Bangs, but "for which they had been recommended to the grace of God," according to the inspired penman, *was fulfilled*.

The case is so plain that even Dr. Barnes, in his commentary on the passage remarks, that, "it was a temporary *designation*, (not a *permanent office*,) to a missionary enterprise in extending the Gospel, especially through Asia Minor and the adjacent regions, and accordingly, when they had travelled through Seleucia, &c., they returned to Antioch, having *fulfilled the work to*

which they were separated." But 2ly, "*prophets and teachers*" might be Apostles, for certainly *they*, were both prophets and teachers, as our Saviour himself was called, and no reason whatever can be given for limiting the expression to mere presbyters. Hence, therefore, allowing it to have been an ordination, it cannot be proved to have been a *Presbyter* ordination.

But 3ly, The idea that St. Paul was here ordained or consecrated, is entirely excluded by the fact, not only that he had then been an Apostle for a period not less than 17 years according to the most accurate computations, but that he himself specifies his own case, as peculiar and different from that of others who were made Apostles after the Saviour's ascension, inasmuch as he became an Apostle, "*not of men, nor by men*," and this strong expression, "*not of men nor by men*," utterly forbids the thought of *any human agency* whatever in his particular case; and this fact that the Apostle so often speaks of his case as peculiar and distinct from others, is an evidence of the *ordinary* necessity of some external act of ordination.

But 2ly, Dr. Bangs appeals, to 1st Timothy 1; 4, where St. Paul says to Timothy, "neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." On this passage the Doctor remarks, "allowing what our opponents contend for, that Timothy was an Apostle or Bishop in their sense of the term, then it would follow that these presbyters conferred orders upon one who was superior to themselves—the same as Mr. Wesley and those elders associated with him, conferred the office of *Superintendent* or *Bishop*—for *I contend not about names*—upon Dr. Coke." p. 94.

Most graceful announcement, from a man whose whole book is founded upon the *Scripture* use of the names presbyter and bishop, as synonymous, and who in this very passage confounds the ecclesiastical name of *Bishop*, with the ordinary name of *Superintendent*! Well, indeed, might the learned Doctor refuse to contend about the *latter* names! But let us examine the passage.

Now, if the casual reader takes it for granted, without exam-

ination, that the word "presbyter" in this passage, means a company of ministerial *presbyters*, then the passage will be an evidence to him that presbyters had something to do with the ordination of Timothy; but if he will take his Greek Testament and Lexicon, and study the subject, by looking at the meaning of the word and the various places where it is used, then he will find that "presbytery" may have a very different rendering; or if he will examine the best commentators upon the passage, such as Calvin, Grotius and McKnight among the dissenters, then he will find, that the word may mean a Council of any elderly persons, Apostles as well as presbyters, or it may mean the *office* of the *presbyterate*, and does not refer in this case at all to the *ordiners*. But if he eschews Greek and Commentators, and wishes to understand the matter by himself and by reading the vernacular, then he may turn to the II Timothy, 1; 6, where it is said, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, *by the putting on of my hands*;" and here he will find that St. Paul the Apostle was the principal and *efficient* ordainer of Timothy; that he even presumes to say that this "gift of God" was conferred "*by the laying on of his hands*;" that his language is exclusive of all others as engaged with him in actually bestowing the gift, and consequently that if it was done *with* the laying on of the hands of presbyters, then they were only present and assisting as is frequently the case now, without any body's dreaming that they are the *ordiners*. Who does not know that in cases of ordinations now, in the Episcopal Church, presbyters are present, laying on their hands *with* the bishop, not as conveying authority, but as assisting, giving assent, and increasing the solemnity? If the reader desires a more critical and exegitical examination of this point, he is respectfully referred to the following works:—"Episcopacy tested by Scripture," "Cook's Essay on the invalidity of Presbyterian ordination," "Chapin's Primitive Church," &c.

But enough has been said to prove that this case, referred to by Dr. Bangs, is not a case of Presbyterian ordination; that Tim-

•thy was not ordained *by* presbyters at all, nor *with* presbyters alone,—and consequently that Mr. Wesley's ordination of Dr. Coke has found no support here.

Now, the two cases of pretended Presbyter ordination which we have considered, and by which Dr. Bangs endeavors to support his theory, ARE THE ONLY CASES RECORDED IN THE SCRIPTURES WHICH ARE EVER BROUGHT TO PROVE THE POINT—the only instances which look at all like any thing of the kind,—and all who place their dependence upon this kind of ordination, are compelled to rest their cause, so far as Scripture is concerned, *upon these two instances alone.*

What must reasoning and reasonable men, and especially christians who desire to build upon the Bible—what must they say of a cause which has no better foundation than this! How can any individual with a knowledge of these facts, and who sincerely intends to make the Scriptures the only rule of faith and practice—how can he feel *secure and safe*, in receiving the sacraments at the hands of those, who, to say the least, have no indisputable bible authority to administer them—who have never been admitted to the christian ministry by any other authority than the doubtful one of *presbyter ordination!* Let no one be angry with me for asking this question—and if any are inclined to be so, let them consider whether it is not the probing of the conscience, which has excited them, and whether, therefore, it is not their duty as christians, prayerfully to investigate the subject as one of practical interest and importance to their souls.

But to Dr. Bangs. “Having thus adduced Scripture authority in favor of our position,” says the Doctor, “let us now enquire whether the practice of subsequent periods of the Church corroborates the interpretation we have given of these Scriptures. In respect to ordination itself, there is but little said in the writings of the primitive fathers; yet that little, plainly proves that it was done by presbyters.” Alas! what must the reader think of this assertion, who is acquainted with the writings of the primitive fathers? But we go on—“Indeed there was no need of asserting in so many words, that presbyters did ordain others, because as

bishops and presbyters were of the same order, whatever was done by one in virtue of his ecclesiastical order, was done by the other,—so that if bishops administered ordination, the presbyters did the same; and as this was generally understood as of right belonging to them, it was quite unnecessary to mention it as if it were a matter of doubtful disputation. However we have some testimonies even to this point."

Here let us breathe a moment, for such kind of reasoning as this, by a grave divine, puts one quite out of breath.

Bishops and presbyters, as the reader has seen, were indeed the same order, until, as Theodoret informs us, the *first* order of the ministry who were originally called Apostles, assumed the name of bishops out of respect to the Apostles; then and after the apostolic age, they were quite a different order. But there is much more upon this point than the passage from Theodoret. Thus, St. Hilary in the 3d century says, "Those who are now called Bishops, were originally called Apostles; but the holy Apostles being dead, those who were ordained after them to govern the *churches*, thought it not decent to assume to themselves the name of Apostles, but dividing the names bishop and presbyter, they left to the presbytery the name of presbyters, and they themselves were called Bishops."

Now we are prepared to go on, remembering that it is not enough for the learned Doctor to prove that Bishops ordained, but he must show that presbyters did so, and the testimony ought to be clear upon such a point as this. What is it?

Thus saith *Firmillian*,—'All power and grace is constituted in the church where *seniors* preside, who have the power of baptizing, confirming and *ordaining*.' "What these *seniors* were may be seen from a parallel passage in *Tertullian*, where he says that, "In the ecclesiastical *courts* approved *elders* preside, not distinguished for their opulence, but worth of character."

"But the passage more in point than any other, is that from *Eutychius*, patriarch of Alezandria, who expressly affirms that the twelve presbyters, constituted by *Mark*, upon the vacancy

of the see, did choose out of their number, one, to be head over the rest, and the other eleven did lay their hands upon him and made him Patriarch."

These are the Doctor's testimonies and all that he has pretended to bring from ancient authors, and although to all these we might briefly reply, that they do not prove a single instance of presbyter *ordination*—the seniors and elders both in Firmillian and Tertullian, referring as well to bishops as presbyters, and the presbyters in Alexandria making one of their number a patriarch, by no means implying absolutely that they ordained him to any office in the ministry—but as these instances have been undoubtedly collected from Miller's Letters, I will transcribe a short portion of Dr. Bowden's reply to them,—and the reader can judge how it is that assertions are made on this subject which have been a thousand times refuted. I begin with Dr. Bowden's sixth letter addressed to Miller.

"In my last, I finished a pretty long list of testimonies from the writings of St. Cyprian, and proved, I am persuaded, beyond the possibility of refutation, that he and all his contemporaries did believe and assert the divine institution of Episcopacy. I shall now close the evidence from the Cyprianic period, by considering your quotation from Firmillian, bishop of Caesarea. In an epistle addressed to Cyprian, he thus speaks; 'But the other heretics also, if they separate from the Church, can have no power or grace, since all power and grace are placed in the Church, where *Elders* preside, in whom is vested the power of baptizing, of imposition of hands, and ordination.' You add, 'this passage needs no comment. It not only represents the right to baptize and the right to ordain as going together, but it also expressly ascribes both to the *Elders* who preside in the churches.'

'This needs no comment!' Concise enough, to be sure! But there are some of your readers who will, I hope, venture to think for themselves. To such I address the following observations: 1st. Firmillian was a very distinguished bishop, and contemporary with Cyprian, from whose works we have extracted such a body of evidence, that bishops in his day, were an order supe-

rior to presbyters, as cannot possibly be controlled. 2nd. Firmilian appears to have been perfectly of the same mind with Cyprian, in all matters relating to the discipline and government of the church, as any one may see who will read the whole of the 75th epistle. 3rd. Firmilian was the disciple of Origen, and we have seen that he asserted the divine institution of Episcopacy. From these considerations we have strong ground to presume, that Firmilian had the same sentiments with respect to Episcopacy, that all his contemporaries had.

But what amounts to more than presumptive evidence, Firmilian in this very letter explains what he means by *elders*. "How is this," says he, "that when we see Paul baptized his disciples again after John's baptism, we should make any doubt of baptizing *them* who return from heresy to the church, after that unlawful and profane baptism of theirs, unless Paul was less than these *Bishops* of whom we are speaking now, that these indeed, might give the Holy Ghost, by imposition of hands, but Paul was insufficient for it." Now we see of what kind of elders Firmilian was speaking; it was expressly Bishops, to whom belongs the supreme power, of baptism, confirmation and ordination. It has been made as clear as any matter of fact can be made, [referring to his former letters,] that bishops in the age of cyprian, were the supreme ministers of the sacraments, and the sole ministers of confirmation and ordination; and Firmilian's ascribing these powers to elders, would prove decisively to every impartial person, that by them he meant bishops, even if he had not said so himself; but when he calls those who were to lay their hands upon the returning heretics, by the appropriate name of bishops—such bishops as he and *Cyprian* were—there cannot be the shadow of a doubt remaining. And here let me add, that when the appellative bishop is used by the writers of the third century, it is always used in the appropriate sense; and presbyters are never called bishops, as has been fully proved by Pearson and Dodwell.

Now, I will give you another quotation from the 75th epistle, which will answer the double purpose of strengthening the above

proofs, if they need it, and showing Firmillian's coincidence of opinion with Cyprian and the other African bishops, and his master Origen, in regard to the divine institution of *diocesan* Episcopacy. After showing from Scripture, that the church was founded upon Peter and the other Apostles, he says, "where we may observe that the power of remitting sins was granted to the Apostles (whosoever sins ye remit, &c.,) and to those churches, which they, when sent forth by Christ, formed and founded, and to those *bishops who succeeded them, in a due and regular course of vicarious ordination*. Under what other notion, therefore, can we consider these adversaries of the one Catholic Church, whereof we are members, these enemies of ours, *of us, I say, who are successors to the Apostles*," &c. Here Firmillian declares himself and Cyprian, and the other Bishops of his time—bishops in the appropriate sense of the word—bishops who had many presbyters and many congregations under them—bishops who had the power of the keys, and the sole power of confirmation and ordination—he declares, I say, these *diocesan* bishops *to be the successors of the Apostles*, holding by vicarious ordination, the very commission which they held, and then, by irresistible consequence, diocesan episcopacy is a divine institution. If any man can doubt what sort of elders or Seniors, Firmillian speaks of, all I have to say is, that he has the power of doubting, certainly, at his own disposal.

I shall now close the testimonies of the third century with the usual quotations from Tertullian, who as you justly observe "began to flourish about the year 200"; as he was converted to Christianity twenty-five years before that period, he is a good witness for the government of the church, both in the beginning of the third century and in the latter part of the second. Let it also be remembered that he was a *presbyter* of the church of Carthage, but never attained the Episcopal dignity. The quotation which you have given from Tertullian I claim for episcopacy. It has been proved from Origen that in the early part of the third century diocesan episcopacy prevailed in the church. Indeed all the testimonies I have produced from the different writers of

that age prove the same thing ; for it is ridiculous to talk of any change a few years before those men lived, when they so positively, so repeatedly and so unanimously found episcopacy upon apostolic institution. Tertullian, we shall find, bears his testimony to the same thing in the following passage ; " The chief or highest Priest, who is the Bishop, has the right of giving baptism, and after him the presbyters and deacons; but not without the Bishop's authority." Now what would a man who has no hypothesis to maintain, think and say of this passage ? Certainly, he would say, here it is evident that Tertullian speaks of an order or grade, to which he gives the title of High Priest and Bishop and which, of consequence from the very title, must be possessed of powers superior, not only to those of the deacon, but also of the presbyter. And this is not only implied in the title, but the writer also gives an instance of the superiority of the bishop in ascribing to him as its source, all the power which the inferior orders have to baptize; and the same must be true also of whatever other powers they are possessed. Now if this be not the meaning of Tertullian, then I do declare, that I have not intellect enough to discover the meaning of as plain a passage as was ever written.

This too is exactly the language and precisely the sentiment of Cyprian, and his contemporaries, as has been proved *ad sati-
etatem*. They all ascribe to the bishop the supremacy of the keys or sacrament, and all the power which the inferior orders exercise in the church; and the bishop's power they ascribe to the apostolical commission, and that commission to Christ, and thus they make out the divine institution of episcopacy. And this, I aver, was the universal opinion, so far as the records of antiquity inform us, from the first foundation of the christian church.

But another testimony from Tertullian is the following, " we have also churches founded by John ; for though Marcion rejects his apocalypse, yet the order or succession of bishops, when traced up to its original, will be found to have John for its author, in the churches which he planted." In this passage Ter-

tullian asserts that St. John founded churches and that he ordained bishops for them—such bishops as existed at the close of the second century—who were the high priests of the church, and having authority superior to presbyters and deacons. If anything can be more decisive than this, I know not what it is.

The next quotation from Tertullian is of the same nature with the last. He challenges the heretics—"Let them produce the originals of their churches, and show the order of their bishops, so running down successively from the beginning, as that every first bishop among them shall have had for his author and predecessor some one of the apostles, or apostolical men who continued with the apostles; for in this manner the apostolic churches bring down their registers; as the church of Smyrna from Polycarp, placed there by John; the church of Rome from Clement, ordained by Peter; and so do the next prove their apostolic origin, by exhibiting those who were constituted their bishops by the apostles."

Here again we have Episcopacy of apostolic institution; Bishops placed over the churches by apostles themselves—not *standing moderators* [or superintendants] but officers who had power *out* of the presbytery as well as *in* it; and much more power when *out* than *in*—not Rectors of parishes with a tribe of useless curates about them; but those officers who authorized Presbyters to administer the sacraments, and of consequence to dispense the *word of life*. These were Tertullian's bishops, and these he tells us were the bishops established over the churches by the apostles."

Dr. Bowden goes on to introduce other testimonies from Tertullian, but I must refer the reader to his letters.

Now for the statement of Eutychius in relation to the churches of Alexandria—that which Dr. Bangs says, "is more to the point than any other"—this is the reply of Bowden to Miller who made a similar assertion.

"I am not a little surprised to find you quoting Eutychius for your purpose. Had you read Pearson, I can hardly think that you would have ventured to do it. He proves him to have

been an author upon whom not the least dependence can be placed, when the fact did not happen in or near his own time. Of this take the following evidence.

1. Eutychius was Patriarch of Alexandria in the *tenth century*. I ask them from whom did he derive his information? From any writers of the first five centuries? Not one of them says that the presbyters of Alexandria consecrated their Bishops.—From the records of the church at Alexandria? Amrus Ebnol when he took that city, burnt all the books therein. What regard then is due to an author who quotes no authorities, and lived too late to know any thing of the origin of the church of Alexandria, but what is to be derived from the primitive writers?

2. Eutychius appears to have been very little conversant with the church of Alexandria, in the early ages. In some well known particulars he contradicts the best writers of antiquity. He says St. Mark came to Alexandria in the ninth year of Claudius, and suffered martyrdom in the first year of Nero; and that under the government of Nero, St. Peter dictated to St. Mark, in the city of Rome, the Gospel which goes under the name of the latter.

This contradicts Eusebius who says that St. Mark died in the eighth year of Nero. Eutychius in this particular contradicts himself also; for he says that St. Peter was put to death in the twenty second year after the Lord's passion; that is before the government of Nero. Nor do any of the ancients say that St. Mark did not write his Gospel, till his return from Alexandria to Rome, or that he ever *did* return. On the contrary it appears from Eusebius that he wrote his Gospel *before he went into Egypt*.

3. Eutychius ignorance of the church of Alexandria, in the primitive times, will appear from what he says concerning Origen, the most noted man of the age in which he lived. Eutychius says, "in the time of the Emperor Justinian, there was one Origen, bishop of the Mangabenses, who asserted the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, and denied the resurrection; that Justinian sent for Origen to Constantinople, and that the bishop of that city excommunicated him." Almost every syllable of this is false. Origen never was a bishop, and he lived in the sec-

ond and third centuries, but Justinian lived in the fifth and sixth.

Dr. Bowden gives many instances of Eutychius' mistakes in relation to matters which happened before his time, and having declared that he, "has now given abundant proofs that Eutychius is not entitled to the least credit, for any thing he asserts concerning the primitive church," he then goes on to show from witnesses who lived at the time and unimpeachable—the same witnesses upon whom we rely to prove the authenticity of the Scriptures, that the primitive church of Alexandria formed no exception to the other churches established by the apostles, but was under the care of the Diocesan Bishops properly ordained from the time of St. Mark. But I must refer the reader to his letters. See also Chapin's primitive church where all the testimony is collected and the succession of the Bishops given.

So much for the church at Alexandria and the testimony of Eutychius, which Dr. Bangs acknowledges is, "*the most to the point.*" In a note, the learned Doctor, (in answer to a writer in the Churchman whom he abuses, but whose language, he does not dare to give) endeavors to sustain the credit of Eutychius, by two quotations from Mosheim, neither of which speak of him as *authority*, and only one of which, I believe, can be found in that author, and which is as follows;—"Among the Arabians (*in the tenth century*) no author acquired a higher reputation than Eutychius, bishop of Alexandria, whose *annals*, with several other productions of his pen are still extant." Here it is evident that Mosheim is not speaking of Eutychius as *authority* nor as a *witness* to matters which happened centuries before his time, but only of his *reputation* as a writer especially among the Arabians. Really I might say with truth, that, among the Methodists no writer has acquired a higher *reputation* than Dr. Bangs, whose primitive church is still *extant*, and yet no one would think that, by this declaration I intended to speak of him as a good *witness*, especially to matters which happened in the first ages of Christianity; far from it. What vituperation and abuse would be heaped upon the head of the poor Episcopalian, who should presume to bring forward a writer in the *tenth century*, as testimony to the

to the true constitution of the primitive church? What changes would be rung about "popery" and the "dark ages?"

Before leaving this part of my subject, let me say to the reader that the testimony of all the writers of the first three centuries of christianity to the apostolic institution of Episcopacy, is as full, clear and unequivocal as it is upon any other subject whatever; and it would be just as absurd for an individual to attempt to prove from their writings that they did not believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures, as that they did not believe in the divine authority of Episcopal government. To be convinced of this, needs no better evidence, than is afforded by Chillingworth, the great apostle of Protestantism, in his essay, entitled, "The Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy demonstrated." In an American edition of his work, recently published and which may or ought to be found in the Library of every Divine, on page 522, the reader may see this essay; and the course of the author's demonstration is as follows:—

1st. "That this government (Episcopacy) was received universally in the church, either in the Apostles' time or presently after, *is so evident and unquestionable, that the most learned adversaries of this government do themselves confess it.*"

Under this head the author gives the confessions of these learned adversaries, and then states,

2nd. "That seeing that the Episcopal government is confessedly so ancient, and so catholic, it cannot with reason be denied to be apostolic."

Under this head the author proves that "so great a change, as between presbyterian government and episcopal could not possibly have prevailed all the world over in a little time," nor could it have been produced without some record, much comination, &c., and then he concludes as follows:—

"When I shall see, therefore, all the fables in the metamorphoses acted, and prove true stories; when I shall see all the democracies and aristocracies in the world, lie down and awake into monarchies: then will I begin to believe that presbyterian government, having continued in the church during the Apostle's times, should presently after, (against the Apostle's doctrine and will of Christ) be whirled about like a scene scene in a mask, and transformed into episcopacy. In the mean time, while things remain thus incredible, and in human reason, impossible, I hope I shall have reason to conclude thus,

"Episcopal government is acknowledged to have been universally received in the Church presently after the Apostles' times.

"Between the Apostles' times and this presently after, there was not time enough for, nor possibility of, so great an alteration. And therefore there was no such alteration as is pretended. And therefore Episcopacy being confessed to be so ancient and Catholic, must be granted also to be *Apostolic; quod erat demonstrandum.*"

Can it be true, as I have heard, that the "Pastor of St. Johns"

introduced Mr. Chillingworth to his audience as opposed to the divine instituion of episcopacy? Most sincerely do I hope, that no individual who attended those Lectures may now be able to recall his name, as having been given in the list of authorities.

Having thus examined the instances of Presbyterial ordination which the learned Doctor has given from the Scriptures, and also his statement in relation to the church at Alexandria, I come now, to consider the modern authors whom he quotes as sustaining his positions.

I. Lord King. "The quotations which I shall produce," says the Doctor, "are taken chiefly from Lord King's account of the constitution, discipline and worship of the Primitive Church. And that the reader may rely upon these as correct, I will remark, that the author has fully verified all his quotations, by inserting the originals themselves in the margin of his book, which any reader of it may consult for himself."

Now, after this, one would expect, that the learned Doctor would give some *actual* quotations from Lord King, but this is not the case; not a single one does he give. As, for instance, he goes on, "Clemens Romanus sometimes mentions many bishops in the church of Corinth, whom he also calls in other parts of his epistles presbyters." But this is not a quotation from Lord King nor is it marked as such, nor is it a quotation from Clemens Romanus, nothing of the kind, but the mere assertion of Dr. Bangs, without any authority whatever, his inferences perhaps from King's book; and so it is with all that follows under the same head. Is this a fair way to give quotations? But now for Lord King himself.

It is true that his Lordship wrote a book, with the above title, not against the church, but favoring parity as agreeable in some particulars to primitive usage and therefore allowable, but utterly opposed in every thing to such a performance as that of Mr. Wesley upon Dr. Coke, in his private chamber at Bristol. And what are the facts about this book? Why, it was so completely and satisfactorily replied to by Slater in his "Original Draught," and in a friendly way, that his Lordship instead of replying to

Slater, presented him with a lucrative benefice at his disposal, as a reward for his triumph. See advertisement to Slater's Draught. Must not a man be hard pushed for arguments who will resort to Lord King? especially at the present time, and when he wishes to introduce the testimony of the Apostolic Fathers,—men whose writings can now be found in every well selected library?

Another author relied upon by Dr. Bangs, is bishop Stillingfleet, of whom he speaks as follows:

“Bish^{op} Stillingfleet has given evidence in his *Irenicum*, of a most diligent and impartial research into the records of the Church on this subject, and from whose learned book I have borrowed the two last quotations. But why should I quote any particular passage of his book, since his entire performance, is taken up in a most successful attempt to establish the fact, that bishops and presbyters are identical as to order, and that therefore they possessed the inherent right of Consecration, before their liberties were restrained by episcopal encroachments, or by their own voluntary act, for the sake, as they thought, of greater peace and unanimity? Yet, as the judgement of such a man after a most laborious investigation, should have great weight in settling controversies of this sort, let us hear him in his own words.”

Now, what are the facts in relation to Bishop Stillingfleet? They are briefly these. He wrote two books on this subject—the one called the “*Irenicum*,” and the other the “Unreasonableness of Separation”—the former written when he was twenty-four years old, the latter when he was forty-five—the former was written “with a view to moderate the violent controversies which the dissenters unceasingly kept alive against the Church,” and under the influence of his feelings on this point he “made concessions which he afterwards not only regretted, but utterly renounced, and this not only in his latter work, but in every way, by sermons and addresses. Hence in the preface to his book on the “Unreasonableness of Separation,” and referring to his *Irenicum*, he says, “Will you not allow one single person, who happened to write about these matters, when he was *very young*,

in twenty years time of the most busy and thoughtful part of his life, to see reason to alter his judgement." In a sermon preached on the occasion of an ordination at St. Paul's, "when his judgement was perfectly matured, and his reading had become more extensive and better digested," he declared, "I cannot find any argument of force in the New Testament, to prove that ever the christian churches were under the sole government of Presbyters;" and again—" *This succession was not in a mere presidency of order; but the bishops succeeded the Apostles in the government over those churches;*" and again, "There is as great reason to believe the Apostolical succession to be of divine Institution, as the canon of Scripture or the observation of the Lord's day." And in his "Unreasonableness of Separation," he asserts, that, "the case of Timothy is an uncontrollable instance of diocesan Episcopacy."

Now, I ask, was it right, was it honest in Dr. Bangs, who must have known these facts, as they have been reiterated again and again, thus to attempt to sustain his arguments by the authority of bishop Stillingfleet? Did he think that his Methodist brethren were so ignorant and credulous as to allow themselves to be duped and deceived, by such a manifest imposition? Must they not regard it as a bare faced deception? Yes! truly, "the judgement of such a man after a most laborious investigation should have great weight in settling controversies of this sort." But when the judgement of such a man is given, we are solemnly bound to give *his best and most sober and most deliberate judgment.* Common honesty requires that we should fully and fairly state all the material facts in the case. Have I a right to say that my neighbor's opinion are so and so, when he himself has informed me that they are *not* so—that although they were so once they are not so now? And this expressly for the purpose of influencing the judgment of others in a matter of the most grave and serious interest? Dr. Bangs had a right to use the *argument* of the Irenicum or any other book which he chose, with due credit, but he had no right to give the *judgment* of bishop Stillingfleet in the way he has, *for it was not his judgment.*

But another authority introduced by Dr. Bangs is Bishop White, as follows:

"The next evidence which I shall bring forward in favour of the truth we are endeavouring to establish, is the late Bishop White. At the close of the Revolutionary war, before the independency of these United States had been acknowledged, the Clergy of the English Church not meeting with encouragement from the Bishops of England, in their application for an American Episcopacy, the Rev. Mr. White, then a Presbyter of the Church, wrote a pamphlet, entitled, 'The case of the Episcopal Church in the United States considered.' In this pamphlet which was published in 1783, the author proposed the electing and consecrating a bishop by the hands of presbyters, pleading the lawfulness of it from the exigencies of the times."

Now, that Bishop White did write a pamphlet with the above title, is true, but that he ever proposed either in that pamphlet or in any other to be found among his acknowledged writings, "*the electing and the consecrating of a Bishop by the hands of presbyters,*" is as gross and palpable a mistake as even Dr. Bangs can utter.

The facts about that pamphlet, are these. The temporary effect of the Revolution, upon the Church, it is not to be denied, was disastrous in the extreme; for many of the Clergy who had been supported here by the "Society for propagating the Gospel," were compelled to return home, and the enemies of the church, with great magnanimity, took that opportunity to array the passions and prejudices of the people against her, and this, notwithstanding that some of the ablest defenders of, and actors in the Revolution (Bishop White among the former and Washington among the latter) belonged to her fold. Under these disastrous circumstances the members of the church were "scattered and pealed," and Bishop White for the purpose of preventing their entire alienation, wrote a pamphlet in which he "proposed," to use his own words, "the combining of the Clergy and of representatives of the Congregations, in convenient districts, with a representative body of the whole, nearly on the plan subsequently

adopted. This ecclesiastical representative was to make a declaration *approving of Episcopacy, and professing a determination to possess the succession when it could be obtained.*"

But to obviate objections to this plan, especially from those who were unwilling to act at all in such a matter without a Bishop, Dr. White endeavored to show, that the case was one of absolute necessity, the arrangement proposed a mere temporary expedient, and therefore, in his opinion, not inconsistent with Episcopal government. His arguments upon that point, however, were seized upon by Dr. Linn in the controversy which was carried on in the Albany Centinel, some years ago, and an attempt was made to draw from them some acknowledgements unfavorable to the claims of Episcopacy. But the Bishop himself wrote to Dr. Linn, and drew from him a confession of mistake. All the Letters pro and con. were subsequently collected by Bishop Hobart, and published in a volume entitled, "Essays on Episcopacy," and to that the reader is referred.

In his memoirs of the church, Bishop White thus alludes to the subject. "Many years after the publication of the pamphlet, a clergyman of standing in an Anti-Episcopal Society, alledged some passages of the performance as sustaining ordinations not Episcopal. But he had the candor publicly to acknowledge his mistake when it was pointed out to him."

I may here add, that the learned Dr. Bangs has gone farther than any other writer in misrepresenting the sentiments of that pamphlet, and to him belongs the peculiar honor of having discovered, that "*it proposed the electing and consecrating of a Bishop by the hands of presbyters.*" What comments can be made upon such a statement, without transgressing the ordinary rules of decorum!

IV. But another argument of Dr. Bangs is, that John Wesley was a "Reformer"—"called, sustained and sanctioned by the head of the Church"—and asking the question, "was it not necessary for the reformation and salvation of the people, for Mr. Wesley to adopt those measures," the Doctor replies, "I think it was." Now, without any comments on the horrible blasphemy

here uttered, as though any thing had been left by the Saviour unfinished, which was really "*necessary* for the reformation and salvation of the people"—such blasphemy as is only equalled by Mr. Wesley himself, when he asked, in his "Appeal," what person could have been less liable to objection than myself, whom the Almighty has employed?"—without any comments upon this, I pass on directly to the assertion, that Mr. Wesley was a "Reformer of the people." Let it be acknowledged that he was, and that his labors were crowned with extraordinary success. What then? Had he a right or has any other man a right, similarly situated, to violate or change any of the established ordinances of the christian church, without an express commission from heaven, and such a commission as can be established by undoubted miracles? Surely not; for the Church is a divine institution—"the *Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood;*" and the christian ministry is not only an essential part of the Church, without which it could no more exist, than any other Institution can exist when it has not a duly constituted succession of officers, but it is a part which the Saviour himself established. Hence we say, that neither Mr. Wesley nor any other man, no matter what his talents or his success as a preacher of the Gospel, has a right to change or alter or modify any part of the Church of Christ, without an express and undoubted warrant from Christ himself. Had Mr. Wesley such a warrant? Was he even an inspired man? Nay, may not his extraordinary success as a reformer in morals and religion, have contributed more than any thing else to lead him astray, so that instead of making him more humble and guarded in not going beyond the commandment of the Lord to do either more or less, he became self-confident and unmindful of his own sacred obligations? Who can read the history of his life without perceiving, in many particulars, the workings of this self-confident and delusive spirit so natural to man? Take, for instance, his controversy with Mr. Whitfield. Here we find him declaring that, "he had an *immediate* call from God to preach and publish to the world, that Mr. Whitfield's doctrine is highly injurious to Christ." And at the

same time we find Mr. Whitfield also declaring, that "he had his doctrines from Christ and his Apostles and was taught them of God"—that "the Holy Spirit from time to time had led him into a knowledge of divine things, and directed him by reading the Scriptures and watching upon his knees, even in the minutest circumstance, as plainly as the Jews were directed, when consulting the Urim and Thummim at the High Priest's breast." And thus it was, that both of these extraordinary reformers, became so deceived and deluded as to believe that they were really inspired, and that one was commissioned to preach against the other. Most honorable is it to Mr. Whitfield that he made to the world a full and frank confession of this delusion. "I do confess," said he, "that imagination has mixed itself with the work I have performed. I own, too, that I have made impressions without the written word, my rule of acting. I have been too bitter in my zeal; wildfire has mixed with it, and I find I have written and spoken too much in my own spirit, when I thought I was writing and speaking entirely by the assistance of the Spirit of God." See Nott's Sermons.

Now, instead of allowing that Mr. Wesley was an inspired man, or that he had a right to change or modify any of the institutions of heaven, in consequence of his wonderful success as a preacher of the Gospel, we rather take him as an illustrious example, to show the dangerous tendency of the doctrines which Dr. Bangs upholds. And we say, that if such a man, with all his talents and acquirements, became so deluded and deceived by a vain and self confident spirit, how much greater is the danger to weaker minds and less established characters!

Here let it be remembered (though in some respects a digression) that the Episcopal Church does not deny the necessity of an inward call of the Holy Spirit, to qualify every individual to assume the great and solemn obligations of the christian ministry. On the contrary, the Church addresses this question to every one who is presented as a candidate for that office—"Do you think that you are inwardly moved by the *Holy Ghost*, to take upon you this office and ministration?" And unless the candidate can con-

scientiously answer that he, "*thinks so,*" he is never ordained. But the church does not look upon the man's assertions in this respect as the *best* proof of his inward call. She rather follows the example of primitive times, when the Apostles said to the brethren, "look *ye* out seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom whom *we* may appoint over this business;" and when the candidates are thus presented by the brethren with the testimony of *their* approbation, the church believes that this is much better evidence of an inward call, and should be so regarded by the condidates themselves, than any fancies or feelings which they may possess. And certainly we may be permitted to think that if any man had presented himself before the Apostles, as "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," *merely* upon the testimony of his own inward assurances however strong, he would have been instantly rejected by them, for that very reason, as utterly unqualified to enter upon the duties of such an office and ministratiion. Indeed we cannot but think that the case of such a man, in some particulars at least, would have resembled that of Simon, who desired to exercise some of the duties of the ministry, and that the Apostles would have said to him as they did to Simon, "thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God."

But what is this doctrine of *success* as it seems to be upheld by Dr. Bangs, and pleaded by the followers of every Reformer? Can it be, that success as we understand and perceive it, is any test of truth, or any proof of a divine commission? We think not; for that which now appears to us so successful may in the end turn out to be a positive detriment to the cause of Truth; and we believe this to be emphatically the case with all such divisions in the christian church as that which Mr. Wesley most unwittingly made. We are verily persuaded that, if "those who profess and call themselves christians," were all "baptized by one spirit into one body," as the Saviour intended they should and prayed that they might—and each individual member, instead of being "puffed up" with his extraordinary gifts, should "esteem other better than himself"—and all "striving togeth-

er" in their several stations "for the faith of the Gospel," then indeed, the prayer of Jesus would be answered, and the implied promise of that prayer fulfilled, the world would believe that God had sent him. But so long as professing christians are not united among themselves, especially upon the fundamental principles of the christian ministry, and every individual is allowed to preach every thing which comes into his head, without any regard to the doctrines of the church, which the Apostle declares is "the pillar and ground of the Truth;" and so long as professing christians themselves have little or no faith in christianity as a divine Institution, containing all that is necessary for the reformation and salvation of the world, which cannot be improved by the hand of man, and which no Reformer, however eminent his abilities or successful his efforts, has a right to modify or change, so long must it be expected that infidelity will increase, that false prophets will multiply and that Christians, instead of making any positive advances in the demolition of the kingdoms of sin and Satan in Pagan and heathen lands, will scarcely be able to maintain their position at home.

But let the Methodist himself test this doctrine of success. Let him go to the Turk and urge the success of Mr. Wesley as a proof of his divine mission, and exhibit before his eyes, if you please, the half million of followers to which the number has been reduced in England. What would the Musselman say? Look to Mohammed and see the number of *his* followers, amounting to more than a hundred and forty millions. And then, if success is really any test of truth, the Methodist would be compelled to fall down and worship the false Prophet of Mecca. But is it said that no comparison can be drawn between the success of Mr. Wesley and that of Mohammed or of any other acknowledged delusion—that the followers of the former were really converted from error to truth, from sin unto God. Let this be acknowledged—although we have reason to believe that there is some truth in every delusion, and enough, it may be, by the grace of God to produce a radical change in the affections of the heart—still the illustration is sufficient to show that *mere success*

is no test of correctness. And besides this the Apostle teaches us rather to rejoice than to weep whenever Christ is preached, though we cannot always approve of the manner, and notwithstanding even he may be preached, "of envy and strife and contention." Allowing, therefore, that Christ is truly preached, by the multitude of sects which are continually starting into existence, and that so far good is done, still it does by no means follow that these sects are right, or that they ought to be approved by the members of the christian church.

But we may take another view of this subject in order to show the fallacy of the argument which is based upon success. If success be any test of correctness, then the want of success must be a proof of error. Will the learned Dr. Bangs maintain this latter doctrine? Will he apply it to the Jewish Church during the time of its captivity and say, that in consequence of that captivity, it was not in reality the church of God? Will he apply it to the christian church during the time of the Arian heresy, or during the period of the dark ages, and say that the Church of Christ did not then exist? Or will he acknowledge the justice of the argument which the infidel sometimes brings against christianity, that if it were really divine, then it would produce a more decided effect upon the character and conduct of the world? But I have no time to dwell lenger upon this point, and therefore pass on to the consideration of another subject.

V. In the latter part of Dr. Bangs' book, the learned author attacks the Apostolic succession and the divine institution of Episcopacy in particular. His first argument is as follows:—

"They (Episcopalians) hold, it must be remembered, that this third order of the ministry is a *divine right*. Now, what is necessary to constitute a *divine right*? It must be *divinely instituted*. *It must rest on an express and implicit command of God*. Nothing less than this will suffice to constitute any ordinance or ceremony divine. But it requires more than this to establish the doctrine of the divine institution of diocesan episcopacy, as held by a portion of the Protestant Episcopalians. They must bring an *explicit command* that this institution is of perpetual obligation

in the church, in all ages, and under all circumstances." p 198.

Now, before examining the objection here brought before us, let me remind the reader that every truth is not only liable to objections, but that nothing is easier than to start objections to the best established facts. The ingenious Atheist can find many objections to the truth of the existence of God. The ingenious Deist is at no loss for arguments to overthrow the divine authority of the Scriptures, and there is no peculiar doctrine of the Bible which may not be doubted and denied by the cavilling sceptic; indeed, it is the peculiar habit of Infidelity to demand, on all these points, *more proof*, and especially to declare the necessity of *some kind* of proof which possibly cannot be brought. The Church, therefore, does not expect that the divine institution of episcopacy, as a fact affirmed and believed in by her, will escape without being called in question by those who are rather disposed to start objections, than to examine evidence. She knows that this is the fate of every truth to be opposed and denied, but at the same time she knows that it is her duty and province to deal in the *positive*—to affirm the truth as she has received it, and this notwithstanding the province of infidelity to deal in the *negative*, to deny the truth which the Church affirms. Let no individual imagine, therefore, that the institution of Episcopacy is not founded upon divine right, because Dr. Bangs or any other man is able to find objections to it, and such objections as may be plausible to those who are unacquainted with the subject.

But what says the learned Doctor? Nothing can have a divine right which is not divinely instituted; and to be divinely instituted, "it must rest on an express and explicit command of God." "Nothing less than this will suffice to constitute any ordinance or ceremony divine." Having laid down these propositions the author goes on to demand this "positive proof," and in the supposed absence of it, he declares, that "there is no such command in the Bible," that "there is no such divine right," and therefore, that Episcopacy "rests solely on an assumption of human authority and is binding upon no man."

Now, in answer to all this reasoning, we reply, 1st, That the

proof which the Doctor here demands is really afforded, that the establishment of the *apostolic office*, being an order in the ministry confessedly superior both to presbyters and deacons, by the *Saviour himself*, amounts to nothing less than a divine command for its observance; and that the subsequent practice of the church in the apostolic age is proof positive, that he intended it to be continued. We say, too, that all the express and positive precepts requiring the obedience of christians to the lawful authority of the ministry, are nothing more nor less than so many commands and precepts requiring obedience to that divinely constituted ministry, which then existed, and which the Saviour and his Apostles established.

We reply in the 2nd, That there is no foundation whatever for the Doctor's assumption, that "nothing less than an express and explicit command of God will suffice to constitute any ordinance or ceremony divine." We deny in toto, this strange assertion, and we consider it not only strange and unsounded, but utterly inexcusable, as coming from a man who professes to be a "Master in Israel." Can the Doctor find an "*express and explicit command*" for the observance of the first day of the week instead of the seventh? and yet, in the absence of such command will he presume to say, that "*it rests entirely on an assumption of human authority, and is therefore binding upon no man?*" Can the Doctor find "*an express and explicit command*" for the admission of females to the Lord's Supper? and yet in the absence of such command will he deny to them the ordinance and declare that they are not bound to receive it? Can the Doctor find an express and explicit command for Infant Baptism? And yet, merely in consequence of the absence of such command will he take the ground of the Baptists, and affirm that this ordinance "*rests entirely on an assumption of human authority, and is, therefore binding upon no man?*" Can the learned Doctor even find an "*express and explicit command*" for the divine right of the canonical books of Scripture? and yet in the absence of such command will he take the ground of the Deist and declare, that they "*rest entirely on an assumption of human authority,*

and are therefore, binding upon no man?" Now will the learned Doctor inform us what respect is due to the opinions of a divine whose arguments "rest entirely on an assumption of human authority," and whose reasonings are so unfounded and absurd as to be "binding upon no man?"

Again, says Dr. Bangs—"This doctrine of an unbroken succession, being a bugbear by which weak and timid minds have been frightened into a belief that the true Church is to be found only among those who can trace their origin through an uninterrupted line of bishops of a *third* order in the ministry, deserves farther consideration. Hence I promised, in my last, to look at those ecclesiastical tables to which reference has been made by Dr. Chapman and others."

"Now, on turning to the tables of Mosheim I find the following note of the historian at the commencement of his catalogue: 'The succession of the first bishops of *Rome* is a matter full of *intricacy and obscurity*. We shall, however, follow the learned Bishop Pearson.' Following this guide Mosheim places *Linus* whom St. Paul mentions in his second epistle to Timothy, at the head of the list, and as succeeding Paul and Peter. According to this, Linus died in the year 79, about forty-six years after the crucifixion. Now, the question is, from whom does the Historian derive his information respecting the list of bishops? Undoubtedly from Eusebius. Well, what does he say respecting the catalogue which he furnishes? In book 4th, chap. 5, he says— 'We have not ascertained, in any way, that the times of the bishops of Jerusalem have been regularly preserved on record, for tradition says that they lived but a very short time.'

Now, allowing that the learned Doctor has here stated the truth, (which, however, I shall be under the necessity of showing is far from the case,) yet allowing that Mosheim speaks of "the succession of the first bishops of Rome as a matter full of intricacy and obscurity," and that Eusebius declares that "the times of the bishops of Jerusalem have not been regularly preserved on record," what would naturally be the inference of any sensible man? That there was no succession of bishops at all

either in the churches of Jerusalem or Rome? Certainly not; for the very fact that the succession is thus spoken of, not as a doubtful matter in itself considered, but only as obscure or intricate or not preserved in its order, is proof positive that some kind of succession really existed. If some historian should say that there is much intricacy and obscurity in relation to the histories of Greece and Rome, would any sensible person, therefore, conclude that no such nations existed as Greece and Rome? Or if it should be said that the *times* of the various Sovereigns of Europe had not been regularly preserved upon record, could it, therefore, be inferred, that there had never been any Sovereigns at all? Or apply these observations to the various versions and manuscripts of Scripture, and because there is much intricacy and obscurity in relation to them, as all must acknowledge, are we, therefore, to conclude that no such versions and manuscripts really existed? Nay, rather, would not such observations absolutely imply their existence? Who doubts the fact that there has been a regular succession of Presidents of the United States, and yet, notwithstanding their recent origin, how many are there who could accurately relate their *times*? Who doubts the fact that there has been a regular succession of Bishops in the American Episcopal Church, and yet, we presume Dr. Bangs would find some intricacy and obscurity in making out the list?

But the fact is, the learned Doctor does not seem to consider it at all important for him to quote his authorities correctly, or to state the real sentiments of the authors to whom he refers. The passage which I have recited and which I now propose to examine, is only a specimen, and by no means the most injurious to his reputation as a fair and candid writer.

1st. As to Dr. Chapman. It is not true that he refers to Mosheim as furnishing any *tables* of his own, but only to the fact that in writing the history of the Church he is obliged to acknowledge the existence of successive bishops in every period beginning from the first, and presiding over the churches, and this acknowledgement on the part of Mosheim who was a dissenter, Episcopalianists regard as a reluctant confession to the truth.

2nd. As to any tables furnished by Mosheim, or that *he* says, "the succession of the first bishops of Rome is a matter full of intricacy and obscurity," all this we utterly deny. One of the translators of Mosheim (McClaine) appends to his Translation, *expressly as his own*, some "Chronological Tables" of Bishops and Sovereigns, and *he* is the person (not the Historian, as Dr. Bangs affirms,) who makes the observation about intricacies and obscurities. At the same time, however, notwithstanding these intricacies and obscurities he has been enabled to furnish us with a catalogue of Episcopal successions beginning with the Apostles and coming down to our own age.

3rd. As to the artful change which the learned Doctor has made from the Bishops of *Rome* to those of *Jerusalem*, and this expressly for the purpose of sustaining the testimony of *his* Mosheim by the testimony of Eusebius, in relation to the former Church, we have nothing more to say, than that such a change would not probably have been made could the Doctor have found any thing at all to his purpose in the latter author. And as there are several copies of Eusebius in this place, the reader is referred to that work, where he will find a "Tabular view of the order of the Episcopal succession," in the churches of Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Laodicea and Cesarea, all given without any expressions of doubt or intricacy or obscurity as to the fact.

4th. As to the quotation which the Doctor has given from Eusebius, I would remark that it is the only one in which he has used the exact words of the author, although he professes to do so in several places; and yet such is the manner in which *he* quotes him, that he has entirely perverted his meaning; for when Eusebius says, "the *times* of the Bishops of Jerusalem have not been regularly preserved on record, for tradition says that they *all lived but a very short time*," the author refers simply to the *length of time during which they lived as Bishops, and not to any uncertainty as to the fact of their existence*. This will be evident to the reader by considering the whole passage. Having concluded some remarks about the Bishops of Rome and Alexandria as

follows, "Alexander, Bishop of Rome died, having completed the *tenth year* of his ministrations—Xistus was his successor; and about the same time Primus dying [in Alexandria] in the *twelfth year of the Episcopate*, was succeeded by Justus"—the author then goes on in the next chapter to speak of the Bishops of Jerusalem as follows—"We have not ascertained in any way, that the *times* of the Bishops in Jerusalem have been regularly preserved on record, for tradition says that *they all lived but a very short time*. So much, however, have I learned from writers, that down to the invasion of the Jews under Adrian, *there were fifteen successions of Bishops in that Church*, all of which, they say, were Hebrews from the first, and received the knowledge of Christ pure and unadulterated; so that in the estimation of those who were able to judge, they were well approved, and worthy of the Episcopatl office. For at that time the whole Church under them consisted of faithful Hebrews, who continued from the time of the Apostles, until the siege which then took place. The Jews then again revolting from the Romans were subdued and captured after very severe conflicts. In the mean time as the Bishops from the circumcision failed, it may be necessary now to recount them in order from the first. The first then was James, called the brother of our Lord; after whom the second was Simon, the third Justus, the fourth Zaccheus, the fifth Tobias, the sixth Benjamin, the seventh John, the eighth Matthew, the ninth Philip, the tenth Seneca, the eleventh Justus, the twelfth Levi, the thirteenth Ephres, the fourteenth Joseph, and finally, the fifteenth Judas. These are all the Bishops that filled up the time from the Apostles, until the above mentioned time, all of the circumcision."

So much for the testimony of Eusebius upon this point, and for his meaning when he says that "We have not ascertained that the times of the Bishops of Jerusalem have been regularly preserved on record," &c.

"This hypothetical manner," says Dr. Bangs "in which Eusebius speaks concerning the vouchers for what he records doubtless induced Mosheim to say that the subject was involved in

much “intricacy and obscurity.” Alas! how much easier is it to make mistakes than it is to correct them, and with how much boldness does this reverend divine pervert the truth! Can that be a holy cause which compels its advocates to adopt such measures in order to sustain it?

Again, the learned Doctor proceeds as follows:—“In the ninth century, between the pontificate of Leo IV, who died in 855, and that of Benedict III, such were the shameful intrigues by which rival candidates contended for the prize of the popedom, that a certain *woman*, who had art to disguise her sex for a considerable time, is said by learning, genius and dexterity, to have made good her way to the papal chair, and to have governed the church with the title and dignity of pontiff for about two years.’ I am aware that the truth of this narrative has been called in question. But Mosheim, whom Dr. Chapman quotes in favor of his ecclesiastical genealogy, with high approbation, says, that ‘during the five succeeding centuries it was generally believed, and a vast number of writers bore testimony to its truth; nor before the reformation undertaken by Luther, was it considered by any either as incredible in itself or as ignominious to the Church.’ And if being in such a corrupt succession, and receiving episcopal consecration, constitute a subject a canonical bishop, I see no reason why Pope Joan may not be considered as good a pope as any of them. This indeed, must be allowed by Dr. Chapman and his converts, or they must at once and forever abandon the doctrine of an unbroken succession. Let them take their choice. Either allow that an intriguing prostitute was a canonical bishop, merely because she was artful enough to mount the throne of the popedom, and obtain the blessing of the succession, or acknowledge that this line was snapped assunder by the hands of an artful woman. I think a man who will deliberately place himself upon either horn of such a dilemma, exposes himself to the just ridicule of all men of sense, and to the commiseration of all women of piety.”....“Here, then, is your *only* fountain, your *only* stream; and that this has been abominably polluted and remains so, contaminated beyond the power of language to describe, by the

bloody waters of strife and war, and the muddy streams of moral pollution, is put beyond all dispute. And more than all, in the instance referred to, the stream became so turbid that it actually ceased to flow. So sensible were the Romish successionists of the truth of this, that when Luther commenced his reformation, and to defend himself against the rude assaults of his adversaries, plunged them headlong into this now turbid and polluted stream; their friends in order to extricate them went to work to open the channel and to cleanse the fountain. Though Pope Joan had lain quietly interred for five centuries, as having been an undisputed pontiff, filling the direct line of succession she was now most inhumanly disinterred and her identity called in question! This was cruel. But what can the upholders of error do, when so hard pressed by the advocates of truth? Luther was *excommunicated*, while Pope Joan had long been *cannonized!* John Wesley was a schismatic, while the *she-pope* had been recognized as a connecting link in the *imperishable chain* of Apostolic succession. Now, will any man in his sober senses say, that the validity of his credentials as a minister of Jesus Christ, depends upon such a succession? That from its having descended to him through such a *bastardly lineage*, he is therefore legitimately born? Let him say it, who wishes." (Dr. Bangs' Original Church, ps 228—231, where much more of the same may be found.)

Now, in reference to all this, I remark

1st. That I could consider it entirely beneath my notice, if I had not been informed that the worthy Pastor of St. Johns had repeated it in substance to his audience, in the course of his Lectures, and if I did not know that our Methodist brethren are very industrious in circulating the story, not only in the Books and Tracts of Dr. Bangs, but by Sermons from the Pulpit. These brethren undoubtedly give it circulation entirely upon the credit of Dr. Bangs, and cannot, therefore, be held wholly responsible for the mistatement, although it is their duty to examine the authorities for themselves, and not to depend entirely upon the representations of any one individual for historical facts.

2nd. That there is no truth whatever in the story of the Papess Joanna, as all respectable historians, whether Romish or Protestant, now admit; and for my own part I see not how it is possible for any decent and respectable scholar, whether christian or infidel, to refer to it as an historical fact. Mosheim relates it as a *story*, and both in Maclain's and Murdock's translation the reader is cautioned against its reception as truth. Thus in Murdock's Translation we find the following note. "Few, if any, in modern times, admit the reality of a *female pope*; and among the English [not Romish] *Pope Joan* has become a proverbial epithet for a fictitious character, which is too ridiculous to be mentioned in serious earnest. None of the contemporary writers mention such a pope; for the passage in *Anastasius Bibliothecarius*, who then lived at Rome and wrote the lives of the popes, is undoubtedly spurious. An *eye witness* could not have written, '*it is said* that a female succeeded to Leo IV,' if he had known it as a fact, nor would he have given currency to such a *falsehood* had he known it to be such. Nor is this the only proof that the passage is an interpolation. *It was two centuries before any writer affirmed the fact.*"

Having thus examined the two translations of Mosheim, I turned to Reese's Encyclopædia, the Encyclopædia Britannica and the American Encyclopædia, and in each of these works, I found a denial of the story as a fact and a full exposition of its "fictitious character;" and then it occurred to me that I would see whether even Gibbon would be willing to lend to it the influence of his name as affecting the honor of christianity. In the 6 vol. p. 207 of his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, he gives an account of two female Sovereigns and says, "their reign may have suggested to the dark ages the fable of a female pope;" and then adds in a note as follows,—"The advocates for Pope Joan produce one hundred and fifty witnesses, or rather echoes of the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. They bear testimony against themselves and the legend, by multiplying the proof that so curious a story must have been repeated by writers of every description to whom it was known. On those of the 9th and 10th

centuries the recent event would have flashed with a double force. Would Photius have spared such a reproach? Could Lautprand have missed such a scandal? It is scarcely worth while to discuss the various readings of Matinus Polonus, Sigebert of Gemblours or even Marianus Scotus; *but a most palpable forgery is the passage of pope Joan, which has been foisted into some MSS, and editions of the Roman Anastasius.*"

So much for the story of the Papess Joanna; so much for the learned Doctor's dilemma that we "must either allow that an intriguing prostitute was a canonical bishop or acknowledge that the line of succession was snapped asunder by an artful woman;" so much for his assertion that "Pope Joan had long been canonized;" so much for that "*now turbid and polluted stream,*" into which the Doctor has plunged himself and in consequence of which, "he exposes himself to the just ridicule of all men of sense, and to the commiseration of all women of piety."

3rd. We reply, that even if the story of Pope Joan were true—an undoubted and indisputable fact—still it would not in the least affect the Episcopal succession either in England or America, nor would it affect the succession, could the learned Doctor prove that fifty of the Popes of Rome were females, or any thing else which he might choose to call them. For at the time when Pope Joan is said to have lived and for centuries afterwards, the Bishops of England no more went to Rome for consecration than they came to America; and even if the succession of the Bishops of Rome had been utterly annihilated, still it would no more have destroyed the English succession than the annihilation of the English succession now would destroy ours. Besides all this, the Church was established in England long before the acknowledgement of the supremacy of the Church of Rome either in that country or any where else. Thus says Blackstone in his commentaries "*The ancient British Church by whomsoever planted, was a stranger to the Bishop of Rome and his pretended authority.*" Commentaries, b 4. c 8.

4th. We reply, that the Episcopal succession whether in this country or in England or in Rome, or any where else, cannot be

so easily destroyed as many persons seem to imagine. Certainly it cannot if it is founded upon the promise of the Saviour, as we believe it is; and to satisfy the mind of a plain christian man, that promise is enough. But for the conviction of cavillers and sceptics and for the information of others, I present the following facts taken from Chapin's Primitive Church, and which will show that this breaking of the links which Dr. Bangs boasts of, is a moral impossibility. Of course I cannot extract the whole of Mr. Chapin's able treatise on the subject, and must, therefore, confine myself to a single illustration, referring the reader to that work for better satisfaction.

"Bishops are said to succeed each other when they follow in the same See or Diocese. Consequently the succession of Bishops in a particular Diocese is the list of Bishops who have governed that Diocese, and may be called a succession of Episcopal jurisdiction or government. But it is a very different thing from the *Apostolic succession*, on which all Episcopal power depends. The difference may be briefly explained thus: When one Bishop ordains another he commits to the person ordained the same Episcopal powers which he himself possesses. Every Bishop, therefore, receives his authority to minister as a Bishop in the Church of Christ, at the time of his ordination or consecration; and he receives it through him who ordained or consecrated. Hence, if we wish to trace back the authority of the present bishops we must go, not in the line of Bishops occupying a particular See, but in the line of their consecrators. The one, we shall call the succession of *Episcopal governors*; the other, the *Apostolic succession*. Our meaning may be explained by an example. All the colonies were originally attached to the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, and hence each of the Dioceses in this country where there was an Episcopal Church before the Revolution, would trace the succession of Episcopal governors back to the Bishops of London. But the Apostolic succession is traced through the Archbishop of Canterbury, the first Bishops of this country having been consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Or we may trace it through the Archbishop of York, as the Archbishop

of York assisted at the consecration of our first Bishops. But we may also trace our Apostolic succession back to the Church of Scotland; for one lawful Bishop is sufficient to confer the Apostolic succession; and as there are at least three Bishops ordinarily engaged in the consecration of a Bishop, we may trace the Apostolic succession through any of the ordaining Bishops. Now, Bishop Seabury was consecrated by Robert Kilgour, Arthur Petrie and John Skinner, Scottish Bishops, November 14, 1784. From him we have received the Apostolic succession thus"—mentioning the person whom he assisted in consecrating, &c. but I omit the names.

"Again, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York were assisted in the consecration of Bishops White and Provost by the Bishops of Peterborough, and of Bath and Wells, consequently if either of these four Bishops had received a valid consecration, the consecration of Bishops White and Provost must also be valid. Now, as every Bishop now living, or that ever has lived in this country, can trace their succession to all these Bishops, all may trace their succession through which line they please.

"Again, the Archbishop of Canterbury was assisted in the consecration of Bishop *Madison*, by the bishops of London and Rochester. Now, since all the Bishops now living or that ever have lived in this country, can trace their succession through Bishop Madison, to either of these Bishops, it follows, that if either of these had received a valid consecration, our bishops have been validly consecrated. We see, therefore, that if either the Archbishops of Canterbury or York, or the Bishops of London or of Bath and Wells, or Peterborough or of Rochester, or of Ross and Murray, or of Aberdeen, had had a valid consecration, our Bishops have all been validly consecrated, and the succession has been preserved unbroken.

"We have detailed these facts more at large than we should have done, had we not designed to have used them to illustrate an important point in this enquiry which seems not to be well understood. We know that from the second century to the present time, it has required at least three Bishops in the consecration of

another Bishop. Now, if it should ever happen, that either one or even two of the three ordaining Bishops, should prove not to be lawful Bishops, the one remaining lawful Bishop would be sufficient to transmit the Episcopal authority. We see, therefore, if Bishops White and Provost and Madison, who were consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, had never been consecrated at all, but had assumed to themselves the Episcopal office, without any authority, still, all the Bishops in our Church would now be lawful Bishops, as all can trace their succession to Bishop Seabury. And yet, Bishop Seabury never assisted in the consecration of but a single Bishop! And what may seem more singular still, is, that there never has been a Bishop consecrated in the Episcopal Church in this country, that could not trace his succession to Bishop Seabury. This will enable the reader to see that the evidence in favor of the Apostolic succession, is of that high degree of *probability*, not to say *certainty*, that the supposition of a break in it, is one of the most improbable ideas that could ever enter one's head, and that it is next to impossible it should ever occur. It will be seen from this, also, that there may have been ever so many vacancies in the line of Episcopal governors, without affecting in the least the Apostolic succession. During this interval all acts peculiarly pertaining to the Apostolic office, must be performed by the Bishop of some other see. This is so obvious to one at all acquainted with the subject, that it would seem unnecessary to mention it, if such vacancies had not been spoken of by the opponents of Episcopacy, as breaking the line of succession. But men wise in other matters are not aware of the fallacy, because they confound Episcopal government with Apostolic succession."

Now, from the illustration here given, the intelligent reader will perceive not only that the learned Doctor Bangs, is unable to break the Apostolic succession by any such stories as those of Pope Joan, but that in the provision made for its continuance by the very nature of things, there is clearly manifest the wisdom of its Founder, and we see in this, as in other facts connected

with the Gospel, that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

5th. Finally, we say to all the Doctor's arguments drawn from the corruptions of the Romish Church, and by which he has endeavored to ridicule and deride the Apostolic Succession, that they apply with equal force to the *uncorrupted preservation of the Scriptures*, and that the Infidel has only to put the *Bible* in the place of *succession*, and he will find a Book ready made to his hands and adapted to his purpose. We say, also, that *the genealogy of our Saviour*, containing in it the names of Rahab and David, is open to the same kind of ridicule and sarcasm; and although, therefore, such a Book will not permanently affect the minds of intelligent people, as all know that the grace and mercy of God cannot be destroyed or polluted by the weakness or wickedness of man—as the light of heaven is uncontaminated by the medium through which it shines and the pollutions of the earth on which it rests—still there may be some who, for a time will be injured by it. In the end, however, we are verily persuaded, that so far from advancing the cause of Methodism, it will prove another "*assassinating knife, sticking fast in the vitals of that body.*"

ADDENDA.

The attentive reader has no doubt observed, that Mr. Steele in his last letter, *refused* to go on any farther in the discussion of those very subjects which had been opened by himself; that he was disposed to confine his remarks entirely to matters of a personal nature, that the "*war*" spirit which was manifested in the first of his communications, had greatly subsided, and he even gave me a gentle hint at the conclusion, that he expected no more letters from me. At this time it was well understood that I intended to publish our correspondence, as the only way to meet the accusations which had been so publicly made, and no doubt it was to prevent such publication that this course was taken. However, as I did not intend in this way to be deterred from the work which had been commenced, I resolved to "*travel*" on alone, and therefore prepared the foregoing Letters, to be addressed to Mr. Steele through the Press. After this was known and some alarm existed in relation to the consequences, I received the following letter, to which I sent the annexed reply:—

BATAVIA, Nov. 7, 1842.

Rev. MR. BOLLES,

Dear Sir—As it is now nearly three weeks since I sent you my answer to your last communication, and as I proposed some questions, embracing, as I thought, the ground of your complaint, together with an assurance that if there had been wrong upon my part, that wrong should be righted, and as a conviction of wrong must depend upon your answer to my questions, I would still say that I should be happy to receive an answer at your earliest convenience.

As the correspondence between us is a matter of your own seeking, you can close it, of course, whenever you are disposed to do

so. As you deny intending a challenge in your first communication, should you write again, you will please state what you did mean by the term "discuss," and whether you do or do not wish to "discuss" publicly the jure divino claims of your Bishops. Had I sent a communication to you to invite you to "discuss" any given point, I should suppose that you would have understood it as a "call" upon my part to debate the question with you, but as my spectral powers may have deceived me in this, you will please explain, and show the difference between a call to discuss, debate, and a challenge. Though I am not a war character, still, believing truth to be immortal I shall not decline a discussion, provided, as I said before, the preliminary questions can be disposed of, by which, I mean the questions to be discussed and the place, time and manner of discussion.

In examining your last communication more carefully than when I replied to it, I find many more mistakes than those I named. To notice but one, and that one you mark as very emphatic, viz. That *we* left Tract No. 4 on sale at the Bookstore. This, I think, you will find to be false.

Yours Respectfully,

ALLEN STEELE,

BATAVIA, November 8, 1842.

The Rev. ALLEN STEELE,

Dear Sir—Your letter of yesterday's date I have perused, and most willingly do I embrace the opportunity of entering into such an explanation of my correspondence, as you seem to desire. The whole matter, then, as I understand it, is as follows:

In the summer, to my entire surprise and without any intimation of your intention, I was informed that you read a communication from your pulpit, in relation to me. What that communication contained, of course I did not know, but some said it contained one thing and some another, and by many, probably, it was not well understood, and may have been greatly exaggerated. At all events it was a very unusual thing—something which I never heard of before, as occurring between christian ministers, however much they might differ from each other on points of Theology, and however strong might be their antipathies; and whether intended or not, it was certainly calculated to publish me, to hold me up to the odium of the community and to destroy my character and usefulness as an ambassador of Christ. So I felt it, and the more severely, as coming from those whose welfare I had sincerely sought, and for whose spiritual good, however much you may suspect my motives, I had most ardently prayed. Then followed a course of Lectures, appointed at a time when the members of the various religious denominations could all attend, to which many came from a distance and even from the neighboring towns, and being founded upon your first communication, they were of course calculated so to connect me with them, as to make me responsible for whatever opinions and sentiments you were pleased to combat.

The effect of all this, upon my own people especially, I greatly lamented; not because I thought it would permanently draw away any from the Church, but at that time, there was more than usual feeling on the subject of religion, and the dispensations of divine Providence among us, had made a deep and solemn impression upon the minds of many. Hence the only course which I thought proper then to pursue, was, to visit as many

families as I could, and to urge them by all means, not to allow any unkind or uncharitable expressions to escape their lips, but to engage more earnestly than ever in prayer to God for the guidance of his Holy Spirit. This I did, as they will bear me witness; and then, in accordance with an arrangement which had been long previously made, I left the place for a few weeks—partly to attend the convention and partly to pay my annual visit to the home of my childhood.

Of course the occurrences here were made the subject of reflection; and I determined as a duty both to you and myself, to take some notice of them; but not hastily, not by any public and unexpected declaration of my sentiments and feelings; but by that course which the Scriptures have prescribed when there are offences “between brethren.” Hence the letter which I addressed to you of September the 7th, my first communication.

Now, if you will examine that letter *carefully*, you will perceive that I confined myself entirely to one subject of complaint, viz. your *communication mentioning me by name*. Nothing was said about the Church; nothing about Bishop DeLancey; nothing, even, about your lectures. But after stating the simple subject of complaint as above, I then went on to declare, that I was “not conscious of having given any just cause of offence either to yourself or your Methodist brethren,” and therefore, that I considered this attack upon my character unkind and unjustifiable, and remembering the many substantial proofs which my people had given to you of their regard, I expressed myself at a loss to account for the reasons of your conduct; for certainly I could not but feel that they, as well as myself, as connected with me by many ties and concerned at least in some degree in my honor and reputation, had cause to be aggrieved. When I spoke of substantial proofs of regard, the idea of money or of subscriptions of money for the erection of your house of worship, did not enter into my mind. I referred entirely to *personal proofs to yourself*, more valuable than money and which money cannot purchase, consisting in the fact of their frequent attendance upon your services, of the uniform kindness and respect with which,

I believe, they have spoken of you, and of the many tokens of esteem for your talents and piety which have thus, and in many ways been extended towards you. Surely then, I had reason to express my surprise at this *sudden* attempt, &c.—and having expressed my surprise, I then added, ‘*True it is*, that between you, as a Methodist, and myself as an Episcopalian, there is a wide difference of opinion on the important subjects of Church government and order, and most happy should I be at any time, in a calm and dispassionate manner, to discuss or examine those differences with you.’ Now, the fact of there being a difference of opinion on certain subjects is here suggested as perhaps a reason for your conduct—(*True*, I say, &c.) but as one which in my opinion was by no means sufficient to account for it, and the more so, as we could at any time, (I was willing,) in a calm and dispassionate manner, discuss or examine our differences, without any injury, at least to the personal character and reputation of either.

Here, then, again, you have entirely mistaken the purport of my letter, for nothing was farther from my mind than to challenge you to a public debate; a thing which could scarcely be *calm and dispassionate* in either of us to suggest—which I could not consent to do with you or with any other man—which I should consider about as unbecoming to our characters as dueling to the character of a northern gentleman, and which would have, perhaps, about as much effect in establishing Truth as dueling has in establishing points of honor. I know that public religious debates have sometimes been held by reputable persons, as dueling has been practiced by them, and I have heard of a man who pleaded this passage of St. Paul in justification of it, “*without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness*,” and hence, he argued, that *with* controversy the mystery would be cleared up—however, this is only one of the beauties of *private* interpretation, and with all your opposition to Oxford Tracts, I am inclined to think in this instance, you will allow, that the man ought to have sought some better guide to the interpretation of Scripture, than his own perverse inclinations.

But can my letter possibly bear the interpretation you have put upon it? I think not. 1st, It does not contain even an *invitation*, much less a *challenge* to any thing, but a simple expression of willingness at *any time*, &c., and of course throwing upon you the responsibility of asking it. 2nd, The words *calm* and *dispassionate* must sufficiently guard it against such an interpretation. 3rd, The word *discuss* does not necessarily mean a public debate, in your sense at all; for a simple discussion may be carried on by two individuals alone, and by writing as well as speaking. 4th, The words *or examine*, (not *and examine*,) are evidently intended to explain more fully the foregoing word *discuss*—and in a public debate I am inclined to think, that there could not be much opportunity for a calm and dispassionate examination either by ourselves or the people.

In the same manner do I think you have manifestly misunderstood the obvious meaning of the next paragraph in my letter. Having begun the letter in the first place by stating the occasion of complaint, and confining that to *one thing*, I then went on to show why I complained,—because I was not conscious, &c., because I thought it an act of unkindness and injustice; because my people, &c., and because our differences, &c., would not justify it,—and then I declared, that such is the nature of your present attack that no other course seems to be left to me, than plainly and honestly to enter my solemn protest agains this extraordinary arraignment, &c. Is there any thing here said or intimated about a *public exposure*, or any *threat* of the kind? Surely not. My letter itself contained the solemn protest, addressed *personally to you*, and so I wished you to receive it.

Then in conclusion, that you might not misunderstand my motive in addressing you, and presuming from what I had heard of your lectures, that you had entirely mistaken my feelings and principles, I quoted and adopted as expressing my own sentiments, one of the most divinely charitable declarations which was ever uttered by the lips of man; and by this I intended, as it were, to let you into my heart—to let you see that I am by no means that monster of bigotry and impiety and intolerance which

you might imagine; at least that I do not think I am; that my intentions are to cultivate the most charitable feelings towards all, though to maintain with firmness whatever I am convinced ~~is~~ the truth; and by such a conclusion to my letter I was in hopes rather to awaken your kindness, than to provoke the feelings of hostility and opposition. But how you have received this portion of my letter your reply will tell.

Thus have I gone over with my first letter, with an explanation of its several parts and the circumstances which gave it birth. Of course I did not know what you would do about it, nor what shape our correspondence might assume, or indeed, whether it would assume any shape. But when your reply came, I could scarcely have been more surprised had you entered my room with a "posse comitatus" to drag me to prison. However, having slept upon the matter, I concluded at all events not to "get mad," and so long as you did not "call me a Bishop," to use the language of Mr. Wesley, I would be content that you call me any of the names mentioned by him in his letter to Mr. Asbury. In this spirit I endeavored to write my reply, entering into a frank statement of all I knew in relation to the Tracts, concealing nothing material to the questions at issue, and stating nothing which I do not believe can be fully established by the most indubitable testimony. At the same time, perceiving from your entire misunderstanding of my first communication, that there was little probability of our coming to any agreement personally, I then determined to follow the lead which you had given me, (notwithstanding your talk about preliminaries,) and discuss the questions of Methodism and Episcopacy; and then, at the conclusion of our correspondence to lay the whole before the public, to enable the people before whom you had arraigned me, provided they were so disposed, to examine *both sides* of the controversy. Hence I worded my second letter in such manner as to let you understand my determination, and your letter in reply, affords conclusive evidence that in this respect you did not mistake me.

But inasmuch as there were several things in your first letter

relating to the Church, to which I had not particularly replied in my second, I commenced immediately an additional communication, as a kind of supplement to the former, and intended to send it to you so soon as your answer should be received. Hence my impatience at your delay, for I wished to hasten the business, and I was anxious to send to you the supplement, which was finished the first week, but which I could not with propriety send without knowing the course you were disposed to pursue. Then came your reply, in which you confined yourself principally to personal matters, saying that *my "epistle refers to subjects which you cannot consent to discuss in this random way," refusing "to travel" with me any farther than necessary to correct the wrong, in mentioning me by name, and about which, certainly, I had no further explanations to make, and then in conclusion, you gave me to understand that you did not much expect to hear from me again, for you said (notwithstanding your questions) "HOPING IF YOU WRITE TO ME AGAIN," &c.*

Here, then, were several plain intimations of your determination to retire from the correspondence, and considering the personalities of your letter, I could not much regret it. However, my own mind was immediately made up—if you would not “travel” with me, to travel on alone; and this I have done. I have prepared a series of Letters addressed to you, and I am happy to say that they are nearly ready for the Press, so that you will have nothing more to do, than to answer them at your leisure, provided you are so disposed. Your letters will be published without any corrections from me, only I intend to send you the “proof sheet,” for your revision. My letters I intend to publish as sent to you, (all that have been sent, of course,) unless an immaterial note be omitted in relation to the opinions of Dr. Bangs, or quotation from him, of which I did not keep a copy—and also the introduction of the *entire* letters of Messrs. John & Ch's. Wesley, which for the argument *then*, it was unnecessary wholly to transcribe.

When you shall make a full and plain reply to that part of my letter asserting that the Tract No. 4, *on Methodism*, was placed

in the Bookstore by one of your own members and not *by me* or *any agency of mine*, and this, as one would naturally suppose, either for sale or gratuitous distribution, and when you shall tell all you know about it, as to the *manner* in which they were procured, and by whom they were placed there for some purpose or other, when this is done, then if your statement shall contradict the material facts of mine, I shall be compelled to bring forward my proof. But until this is done, I shall consider the important fact in the matter, to be confessed by you.

Now, my dear Sir, I have a few remarks to make of a somewhat different nature from any that have gone before. In my correspondence with you, I have endeavored not to manifest a captious spirit; not to seize upon a few unguarded expressions and torture them to your injury, and although you may think differently, yet I do assure you there are many things in your letters, to which I have been unwilling even to refer, but which might easily be made to react with much force upon yourself. Take, for instance, your boast of not having preached on controversial subjects, &c. How strange a boast for you to make; when contrasted not only with the fact that according to your own acknowledgement you intended to do so, at the conclusion of your evening Lectures, to which all denominations are especially invited, but with the more important fact that not a year had elapsed before you found yourself in the utterance of the most unfounded charges against a neighboring body of christians, and that very body the one, which had given you its aid in building you up and from which your sect originally sprung. In a single year—a time too short to test the talents and integrity of any man—and you have committed an act which, to say the least, was *hasty in the extreme*, and which in its results, may be almost as cruel to yourself as to me.

But of all that is passed I freely forgive you, and not only forgive you but acquit you of all blame, for I do not believe this matter has originated with you. On the contrary, I am persuaded that you and a few other excellent members of your church, have allowed themselves to be controlled by *one or two*

individuals, and for the sake of pleasing them, and yielding to their misguided prejudices and judgments, you have acted inconsistently with your own sober convictions. By them your mind has been poisoned in reference to me, and to the members generally of the Episcopal Church. Hence the attempt which was made on the first opening of your house, to place it in an attitude of rivalry to us, and this unhallowed feeling of rivalry has led them on from one step to another until the opportunity was seized upon to direct their efforts against me, and if possible, to break me down, as standing in their way.

But I have lived in this community too long, and I know the people of this village too well, to believe, that they will allow this effort to succeed. There are many generous hearts in your own congregation, who will remember the past, who have often sympathized with me in the duties and trials of my office—who know, that in darker days than these I did not fear to lift up my voice against every kind of immorality and sin, whether in high places or low, who have found me no proselyting friend in seasons of affliction and distress, and to them I am confident I might safely go for protection against the assaults of such individuals as those to whom I have alluded.

And though my success as a minister among my own people has not been equal to my hopes and expectations, and I have many things to lament and bewail in myself as well as in them, yet, when I consider the peculiar difficulties of my situation—the harrassing task of a weekly preparation for the Pulpit year after year—the little time which is consequently afforded me for pastoral visiting—the limited experience which I possessed in all these matters when I came here—when I remember these, I cannot but feel that I have much cause for gratitude to God—and I do not believe, therefore, that the friends among whom I have thus labored, and who have stood by me so long, are now prepared to cast me off a *wilfully false and slanderous defamer of the brethren.* No, sir, against all such charges, *originating not with you*, nor with your people generally, but with one or two individuals, I feel that I am standing upon a rock, and am protected

above and around and within me by many invincible shields, so that however poisonous their arrows, they fall harmless at my feet.

This letter you will please to receive in reply to your last—though referring in the conclusion to the tone and temper of your previous communication. A direct reply to that, however, will appear in the pamphlet which I intend to publish. As the papers for that pamphlet, which are already prepared, will swell it to a considerable size, I shall not now be able to admit any further communications. *But if you will take up the subject of Episcopacy or any other subject connected with the Episcopal Church, and discuss it in writing, in any shape you please, and settling your own preliminaries, then I engage to follow you, and we will publish it either in numbers or when the whole correspondence is finished—* or if you like this expression better, we will leave the whole to the disposal of the public.

Sincerely believing that I have written nothing which forbids me the happiness of subscribing myself

Your friend and brother in Christ,

JAMES A. BOLLES.

APPENDIX.

A

"REASONS AGAINST SEPARATING FROM THE CHURCH."

The following reasons against separation were published by Mr. John Wesley, and read among the Methodists, expressly for the purpose of "breaking down the schismatical spirit." How applicable they are to the present state of things in that denomination, let the reader judge:

"Because it would be a contradiction to the solemn and repeated declarations which we have made in all manner of ways, in preaching, in print and in private conversation.

Because on this, as well as many other accounts, it would give huge occasion of offence to those who seek and desire occasion; to all the enemies of God and truth.

Because it would exceedingly prejudice against us many who fear, yea, who love God; and thereby hinder their receiving so much, perhaps any further benefit from our preaching.

Because it would hinder multitudes of those who neither love nor fear God, from hearing us at all.

Because it would be throwing balls of wild fire among them that are now quiet in the land. We are now sweetly united together in love. We mostly think and speak the same thing. But this would occasion inconceivable strife and contention between those who left and those who remained in the church, as well as between those who left us, and those who remained with us: nay, and between those very persons who remained, as they were variously inclined one way or the other.

Because, to form the plan of a new church, would require infinite time and care, (which might be far more profitably bestowed)

with much more wisdom, and greater depth and extensiveness of thought than any of us are masters of.

Because, from some having barely entertained a distant thought of this, evil fruits have already followed; such as a prejudice against the clergy in general, and aptness to believe ill of them; contempt not without a degree of bitterness, of clergymen, as such; and a sharpness of language towards the whole order, utterly unbecoming either gentlemen or christians.

Because we have melancholy instances of this, even before our eyes. Many have, in our memory, left the church, and formed themselves into distinct bodies. And certainly some of them from a real persuasion, that they should do God more service. But have any separated themselves and prospered? have they been either more holy, or more useful than they were before?

Because, by such a separation we should not only throw away the peculiar glorifying which God has given us, "That we do and will suffer all things for our brethren's sake, though the more we love them, the less we be loved;" but should act in *direct contradiction to that very end, for which we believe God hath raised us up.* The chief design of his providence in sending us out, is undoubtedly to quicken our brethren. And the first message of all our preachers is, to the lost sheep of the church of England. Now, would it not be a flat contradiction to this design, to separate from the church? These things being considered, we cannot apprehend (whether it be lawful in itself or no) that it is lawful to us; were it only on this ground, that it is by no means expedient.

It has indeed been objected, that till we do separate, we cannot be a compact, united body.

It is true, we cannot till then be a compact united body, if you mean by that expression, a body distinct from all others; and we have no desire to be so.

We look upon ourselves, not as the authors or ringleaders of a particular sect or party; it is the fartherest thing from our thoughts; but as messengers of God to those who are Christians in name, but Heathens in heart and life; to call them back to

that from which they are fallen, to real, genuine Christianity. We are therefore debtors to all of them, of whatever opinion and denomination; and are consequently to do all that in us lies, to please all for their good to edification.

We look upon the *Methodists*, so called, in general, not as any particular party; (this would exceedingly obstruct the grand design for which we conceive God has raised them up)—but as living witnesses in, and to every party, of the Christianity which we preach; which is hereby demonstrated to be a real thing, and visibly held out to all the world.

We look upon the clergy, not only as a part of our brethren, but as that part whom God, by his adorable providence, has called to be watchmen over the rest, for whom, therefore, they are to give a strict account. If these men neglect their important charge; if they do not watch over them with all their power, they will be of all men most miserable, and so are entitled to our deepest compassion. So that to feel, and much more to express either contempt or bitterness towards them, betrays an utter ignorance of ourselves and of the spirit which we especially should be of.

Might it not be at least a prudent rule, for every Methodist preacher, not to frequent any dissenting meeting? Though we blame none who have always been accustomed to it. But if we do this, certainly our people will. Now this is actually separating from the Church. If, therefore, it is, at least, not expedient to separate, neither is this expedient. Indeed, we may attend our assemblies and the church too, because they are at different hours. But we cannot attend both the meeting and the church, because they are at the same hours. If it be said, "But at the church we are fed with chaff; whereas, at the meeting we have wholesome food:" We answer; 1st. The prayers of the church are not chaff; they are substantial food for any who are alive to God. 2nd. The Lord's supper is not chaff, but pure and wholesome for all who receive it with upright hearts. Yea. 3rd: In almost all the sermons we hear there, we hear many great and important truths. And whoever has a spiritual discernment may easily

separate the chaff from the wheat therein. 4th. How little is the case mended at the meeting? Either the teachers are *new-light-men*, denying the Lord that bought them, and overturning his gospel from the very foundation; or they are predestinarians, and so preach predestination and final perseverance more or less. Now, whatever this may be to them that were educated therein, yet to those of our brethren who have lately embraced it, repeated experience shows it is not wholesome food; rather to them it has the effect of deadly poison. In a short time it destroys all their zeal for God. *They grow fond of opinions and strife of words.* They despise self-denial and the daily cross; and to complete all, wholly separate from their brethren.

Nor is it expedient for any Methodist preacher to imitate the dissenters in their manner of praying: neither in his *tone*; all particular tones, both in preaching and praying, should be avoided with the utmost care. Nor in his *language*; all his words should be plain and simple, such as the lowest of his hearers both use and understand. Nor in the length of his prayer, which should not usually exceed four or five minutes, either before or after sermon.

If we continue in the church, not by chance or for want of thought, but upon solid and well weighed reasons, then we should never speak contemptuously of the church, or any thing pertaining to it. In some sense, it is the mother of us all, who have been brought up therein.

In order to cut off all jealousy and suspicion from our friends, and hope from our enemies, of our having any design to separate from the church, it would be well for every Methodist preacher, who has no scruple concerning it, to attend the service of the church as often as conveniently he can. And the more we attend it, the more we love it, as constant experience shows. On the contrary, the longer we abstain from it, the less desire we have to attend it at all."

B

THE CHARACTER OF THE TWO BROTHERS JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY,
IS THUS DRAWN BY SOUTHEY.

"Entirely as these two brothers had agreed in opinions and principles, and cordially as they had acted together during so many years, there was a radical difference in their dispositions. Of Charles, it has been said, by those who knew him best, that if ever there was a human being who disliked power, avoided preeminence and shrank from praise, it was he; whereas no conqueror or poet was ever more ambitious than John Wesley. Charles could forgive an injury; but never again trusted one whom he had found treacherous. John could take men a second time to his confidence, after the greatest wrongs and the basest usage; perhaps because he had not so keen an insight into the characters of men as his brother; perhaps because he regarded them as his instruments, and thought that all other considerations must give way to the interests of the spiritual dominion he had acquired." Southey's Life, 2 vol. p 138.

C

DISCIPLINE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

For the purpose of obtaining information upon the subjects indicated in the following letter, I wrote to an intelligent farmer of this neighborhood, who is a *Methodist Protestant*—a man of undoubted probity and excellency of character, and who, as I knew, had paid considerable attention to the internal regulations of the Methodist Episcopal Church:

My dear friend—As I know you have paid considerable attention to the *Discipline* of the M. E. Church, I take the liberty of asking you for a concise statement of *facts* upon that subject. What are the powers of their bishops? What the authority of their Ruling Elders? Who compose their Conventions or Conferences, and what position do their Laity occupy in the administration of the *temporal* and *spiritual* affairs of that denomination? What are the points of *discipline* against which as a Methodist Protestant, you protest? If you will be so kind as to give me the simple facts in relation to the subjects referred to above, you will much oblige

Your friend, &c.

Rev. and dear Sir—I received your note containing five interrogations relating to the “Discipline” of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The limits of a single letter will not allow me to do justice either to myself or the subjects of inquiry; but as you desire a “concise statement, of the simple facts,” I will give them to you, so far as I understand the letter and spirit of the said Discipline.

1st. “What are the powers of their bishops?”

If you allude to the discipline of 1784, when they adopted a “moderate Episcopacy,” believing the succession from the Apostles to be a fable, &c., and their bishops as nothing more than

Pastors and Presbyters, and their powers the same, *then* I would say, that the Bishops had not the cares of the world upon them. But if you allude to 1789, when the Episcopacy obtained the Legislative powers of the Church, and they declared themselves Bishops, "by regular order and succession;" and to 1790, when they declared themselves invested with FULL POWERS to act DECISIVELY in ALL TEMPORAL matters, (see Minutes,) then I am prepared to give a "concise and simple" answer to your inquiry. You will observe that the title given to said Church is indicative of the officers whose prerogative it is to govern the church, and in whom is vested the executive power. Neither in the ordination service nor in any part of the Discipline is the government mentioned as being vested in the Elders or Deacons, but that they must give up their own will (p. 36,) and submit entirely to the will of their bishops. (p. 135.) Now, to understand more fully the extent of the "powers of their bishops," you must also observe, that the M. E. Church claims to be *one and indivisible*, so that they have no church in Buffalo, Batavia or Rochester, nor in any one of the states, nor in any number of the States less than the whole, and thus as their church identity extends from the rivers unto the ends of the earth, so extensive are the powers of their Bishops, for they oversee the whole, both in "*temporal and spiritual concerns.*" (p. 26.) They have the sole and exclusive jurisdiction and executive authority, as the head over Elders, Deacons and preachers, in all the annual conferences, (p. 25,) to send them when and where they think proper;* they have power to make, form, divide, subdivide and reunite districts, (157) circuits, stations, &c.; to ordain Bishops, Elders and Deacons, (p. 26;) to receive, change and suspend preachers, (p. 26,) to appoint their presiding Elders, (25-28,) to preside in person, by a presiding Elder or preacher in charge, in every judicial depart-

* In looking at the VI Section of the Discipline, concerning Missions, I perceive that the Bishops possess power to transfer preachers to any part of the United States, to Texas or to Africa—and that too, not only without their consent, but *against their will!* page 179, viz. "Whereas a mission is to be established by a Bishop either among the *aborigines of our country or elsewhere,*" &c.

ment which they claim as such, from the General Conference down to a committee for the trial of a Lay-member (25, 89;) they possess a *life power* and control over church property, (26-159, see also deed of settlement and note at the end of said deed 167,) the aggregate amount of the whole not less than *five millions of dollars*, and constantly increasing. The travelling preachers are tenants of the parsonages and chapels at will, and at the end of each year may be removed by the bishop; this places the preachers in a state of dependence on Episcopal power, which is claimed by *divine right*.

2nd. "What the authority of their Ruling Elders?"

If you mean the presiding Elders, they are the vice-gerents of the Bishops; thus situated, they go by the Episcopal will in all their acts, (30, 124,) and therefore, they cannot see or feel the rights, interest or will of preachers or people, only as they view them connected with, and subservient to the interests of the office of which they are *deputies*.

3rd. "Who compose their Conventions or Conferences."

"The *General Conference* shall be composed of one member for every fourteen members of each annual conference," with the Arch, or Senior Bishop at their head. (19.) The travelling preachers compose the annual Conferences, with a Bishop at their head; the quarterly conferences are composed of travelling and local preachers, and travelling preacher's officers, viz. Exhorters, Stewards, Leaders, "*and none else*," (p. 29,) with a Bishop at their head. Thus you see, that *Lay-members*, as such, are excluded from the Legislative, Executive and judicial powers of said Church.

4th. "What position do the Laity occupy in the administration of the temporal and spiritual affairs of that denomination?"

In the temporal concerns they can build Chapels and Parsonages for their Bishops, to be occupied by the travelling preachers who are nominal owners only, (159, 167.) They can pay their money to the Preacher's officers—the Stewards—for the support of the travelling preachers, their wives and children. The Laity, *as such*, are not allowed by any rule of Discipline to

"occupy any position," other than above, in the administration of the temporal concerns of that denomination. The Church property is held by Trustees who are appointed by the vice-Bishops, (167,) subject to such rules only as the General Conference may from time to time, choose to make, (163.) The Laity therefore have in reality no Church property. The *Stewards* who "transact the temporal business," are appointed by the travelling preachers, who act for the Bishops. Thus you see the position of the Laity. They have no voice even in electing Trustees or Stewards. As to the position of the Laity in administering the "spiritual affairs" of said Church, I would say, that virtually they have none at all, other than subjects. There is no rule in their Discipline which secures to the Laity a voice in making or administering their laws, or in any part of the Executive or Judicial departments;—they have not the right of challenge to a Jury who have been packed by the preacher to try them; they do not even occupy the position of *constituents*, being disfranchised of that palladium of every man's freedom—the sacred rights of suffrage! The General Conference monopolizes all suffrage and representation to travelling preachers—nay, the Laity, *as such*, are not even recognised as belonging to the *Church*, but only "to the denomination." If I understand the phrases of some of their preachers and writers, the travelling Preachers, Elders and Bishops, by a misnomer, call themselves "*The Church*"!!* (See Vindication—Repository No. 7, p. 262. Also, Saethen, p. 159.)

5th. "What are the points of Discipline against which, as a Methodist Protestant, you protest"?

To all the above that is not in accordance with a free representative government. To that part of the Discipline where it is stated that "Mr. Wesley preferring the Episcopal mode of Church government, *ordained Dr. Coke*," &c. as not being true, and to the assumption of the Episcopacy in 1789, claiming to be Bishops "by regular order and succession," (see Minutes.) To

* Thus, for instance, in one place they say—"The Rules by which the Methodist Episcopal Church governs its members."

the principle, that *all power in every department emanates from the travelling ministry, and no part from the local ministry and people.* To the concentration of every kind of power, executive, legislative and judicial, in the same hands, and to the fact that these officers are not responsible for the exercise of this power to any but themselves. To the denial of the right of suffrage to the Laity, and to that part of the Discipline which is liable to be construed into a prohibition of the freedom of speech and of the Press, (90.) This has been done in Baltimore, and many other places, where the reformers were expelled for publishing, reading and circulating the "Mutual Rights," a paper containing communications against the unwarrantable and *assumed* powers of the Episcopacy. Finally, to the whole *system*, its *tendency* and *operations*, we do most deliberately and solemnly PROTEST, as being anti-Christian and unrighteous. We believe that the Episcopal power as exercised in said Church, is wrong in principle, that it is in a wrong place and wrong country, and that it will ultimately lead to wrong consequences, reducing religious liberty below the standard of civil. That such a system should obtain in this land of freedom is mysterious, and I am surprised that the people belonging to that denomination should tamely submit to it, especially if they "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the whole," as their Bishops desire they should, (p. 4.) We do not object to the doctrines and means of grace, but to the fundamental principles of the government itself (not the administrators thereof) we do object.

Yours Respectfully,

P. S. It is contended by some of the travelling ministers and writers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, that "*the entire power is with the people*"; that the "Quarterly Conference shall have authority to license proper persons to preach and renew their license annually," &c. "Here," say they, "we hope you will learn that the entire power of constituting the ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church is in the hands of the people, and that all the Bishops, Elders and Deacons in the Church, cannot

authorize one person to preach the Gospel, in the Methodist Society, should the Church of which he is a member give their negative." But, I ask, who compose the Quarterly Conferences? The Bishop, presiding Elders, one or more travelling Preachers, Stewards and Class Leaders. Is one of these a representative of the people? No! not one. The Ministers are there in their own right as Ministers. The Class Leaders are there by appointment of the Ministers; the Stewards likewise—not one is chosen by the people to represent them in the Conference. If all the lay-members of the Methodist Episcopal Church should meet together in one vast convention, to elect even a single class leader, they could not do it. Let them try it in one or in a hundred conventions, and it will be found that they cannot put a letter in the Book of Laws, nor take a letter from that Book. The "*entire powers*" of the members of said Church are precisely like the powers of the Centurion's servants, to do as they are commanded. This is their "*entire powers*," nor do they possess a whit more or less.

Against the "*full powers*," we were Protestants; for ten years we protested. Twice during that time, did the men with "*full powers*"* set us at nought. "*They knew no such rights.*"—They scorned our memorials; they turned some of us out of their doors, and while the doors were open some of the other prisoners went out of their own accord. And because we had protested, and had been expelled for our protestations, we chose the name of Protestants, and being Methodists still, we said that we would be called *Methodist Protestants*. Acknowledging the Lord Jesus Christ as the only divine head of the Church, and the word of God as the sufficient rule of faith and practice, in all things pertaining to godliness, and being fully persuaded that the representative form of Church government is the most scriptural, and the most congenial to our views and feelings as fellow citizens with the Saints and of the household of God.

Yours, &c.

* i. e. The General Conference.

D

THE RIGHTS OF THE LAITY IN THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

"The Laity are recognized as a distinct and independent order in the Protestant Episcopal Church. They have a constitutional or chartered right to act in all the legislative affairs of the Church, without exception—and this not as they happen to be members of legislative bodies, but *as a separate and independent order*, always represented in those bodies.

To be somewhat more particular:

I. The Laity have a right to manage their own parochial affairs, as members of separate and independent parishes; to elect their own Ministers and settle them, to hold corporate funds, to appoint their own parish officers, &c., and finally to elect or appoint and send lay-delegates from the several parishes to represent them in the Diocesan Conventions.

II. They have a right, *as a separate order*, in the Diocesan Conventions, in the discussion and passage of all legislative acts; in the appointment of all conventional committees and officers; in the election of standing committees; in the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline, &c.; and finally in the election of all the Diocesan Bishops of the Church, and in the election of Clerical and Lay-Deputies to the General Convention.

III. They have a right as members of the Standing Committees to act directly as well as representatively, in advising the Bishop; in deciding upon the election of Bishops by other Dioceses, and upon the resignation of Bishops; in short, in exercising all the manifold and important functions of that body, and especially in recommending all candidates for orders, first to be received as candidates by the Bishop, and afterwards to be ordained by him.

We believe that in this last mentioned fact, (as in others) the Laity in the Protestant Episcopal Church exercise a power beyond that exercised by them in any other denomination whatev-

er. No person can be either received as a candidate for orders, or afterwards be ordained, without the consent and recommendation of the standing committee.

IV. They have a right, as an order, in the General Convention, to act in the arrangement and regulation of all the creeds and formularies of the Church and modes of public worship; in all the legislation of that body; and, finally, in the recommendation and appointment of all the Bishops of the Church.

V. They have a right to a fair trial by *disinterested persons*, in any cases of ecclesiastical discipline, and a right not only to protect themselves from arbitrary or oppressive treatment in such cases, but also to punish those who would thus tyrannise over them.

VI. Finally, they have a constitutional and chartered right, and the power also, to protect themselves in the full and perpetual enjoyment of all their rights.

The point which we wish our readers to observe most attentively in these statements is this—that the Laity are always regarded (and constitutionally regarded) in the Protestant Episcopal Church, *as a separate and independent order*; and their influence is felt, not only as they happen to be good debaters or happen to number more or less in our ecclesiastical body, *but as they are a constituent body*—so that whether they lead or not in the debates, or whether they are few or many in the body, they have always as an order, their independent and legitimate and controlling power.” (Vail’s Comprehensive Church.)

E

AN ATTEMPT TO PREVENT THE CIRCULATION OF "THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH DEFENDED."

Among the first persons to whom the Prospectus of this work was shown, was the Rev. Allen Steele. Some months afterwards, however, the following article appeared in a Methodist paper published at Auburn, and was accidentally seen by me in the Post Office of our village:

"MORE JESUITISM IN THE PROTESTANT E. CHURCH EXPOSED.

"BATAVIA, Jan. 31, 1843.

To the Editors of the Northern Advocate:

Dear Sirs—My attention has, within a few days, been called to an advertisement in the Gospel Messenger, a newspaper published at Utica and edited by the Rev. Dr. Rudd, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, of which the following is a copy:"

[Here follow the Title of the Pamphlet and the Advertisement, to which the reader can refer.]

"As the prospectus of this forthcoming work, thus advertised, contains statements calculated to mislead especially my Methodist brethren, and as it has already induced some of them to become subscribers to it, under the impression that it would indeed be made up of a series of letters being a correspondence between the Rev. Mr. Bolles and myself on the subject of Protestant and Methodist Episcopacy, I deem it my duty publicly to apprise my brethren and friends of the errors thus set forth and announced, desiring all who may read the work to suspend their opinions until my reply shall be given, which will be prepared and published in such form as the circumstances demand and at as early a period as time will allow after I have been permitted to peruse the work named in the above prospectus.

The advertisement here copied sets forth several points which

are not true. 1. It is not true that this work will be made up of a correspondence between Mr. Bolles and myself on the subjects named. 2. It is not true that it will contain my replies to letters thus stated to have been addressed to me. 3. It is not true that I have publicly made charges against individuals, 'mentioning them by name.' 4. It is not true that I have made 'an attack upon the Episcopal Church in a series of lectures.' And, lastly, it is not true that this correspondence was commenced in consequence of such reputed or here named attacks. How far the assertion that 'the reader will find in these letters a number of rare and important facts and documents relating to Methodism' will be sustained will be more clearly seen when the work can be read and reviewed.

The greater amount of matter which this work will embody, and stated to be contained in letters to me, I am sure has never been before me. A very few letters from Mr. Bolles I received and to a few only replied, and not to those few under the impression that there was any design to create a correspondence for publication.

Conceiving that by these statements I shall sufficiently apprise my brethren and friends of the character of this announced book to prevent their being led astray by its pretensions, I will let the matter here rest until I can have an opportunity to read Mr. Bolles' work and understandingly give it a more extended notice.

ALLEN STEELE."

After reading the above article, and ascertaining that an unusual number of the papers in which it was contained, were sent to this village, *though not a single copy had been sent to me*, I wrote for the Northern Advocate a *reply*; but the Editor REFUSED TO PUBLISH IT!! For this reason the reply is inserted here. Comments are unnecessary.

THE CHARGE OF "JESUITISM" REFUTED.

To the Editor of the Northern Advocate:

Dear Sir—Your paper of the 9th inst. under the head of "*More Jesuitism in the Protestant Episcopal Church Exposed,*"

contains an article signed Allen Steele, to which I beg leave, through the same medium, to make the following reply.

That the Rev. Mr. Steele should differ from me, in matters of opinion, is by no means singular; but that there should be such a vast difference in our recollection of matters of fact, is marvellous indeed, and can only be accounted for on the supposition, that one or the other of us is entirely deceived. Which it is, time will show.

Without intending to impeach his motives therefore, I am under the necessity of saying, that I cannot agree with him at all, in the statement which he has been pleased to make in the article referred to above. My own belief is, that my correspondence with Mr. Steele was commenced in consequence of charges publicly made by him against individuals, *mentioning them by name*, and a subsequent attack upon the Episcopal Church in a series of Lectures—that I am now engaged in the publication of that correspondence—that this publication will contain Mr. Steele's replies, and including those replies, will be made up of *Letters addressed to him on the subjects named in the title page of the Book*—that Mr. Steele had an opportunity of replying to every thing which he chose at the time, and consequently that my advertisement makes no pretensions which will not be fully sustained.

All these, I believe to be facts, and such facts as the Book itself, when published, will show beyond all contradiction *are too plain and palpable to be denied*.

But more than this. I am confident that the Book which I am about to publish, will show that Mr. Steele has no cause whatever for complaint; that my language towards him in all my letters is respectful and proper—entirely free from every railing accusation; and that I have even offered to go over the whole subject again, and said to him in these very words—*if you will take up the subject of Episcopacy or any other subject connected with the Episcopal Church, and discuss it in writing, in any shape you please, and settling your own preliminaries, then, I engage to follow you, and we will publish it either in numbers or when the whole correspondence is finished.*

But I will say no more at present in reply to the extraordinary statement which Mr. Steele has been pleased to publish; his charge of "Jesuitism," not upon me only, but upon the whole Episcopal Church, is a solemn thing, and what he must answer for at another tribunal than that of public opinion.

The Printer who is publishing my Book is a member of Mr. Steele's congregation, and as it will soon be out, every individual can read and judge for himself.

JAMES A. BOLLES,
Rector of St. James' Church, Batavia, N. Y.

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NOTE BY THE PRINTER.

The delay in the execution of this work—the smaller compass
unto which the matter has been compressed than was contemplated
in the Prospectus, and the many typographical errors, must
be attributed to the difficulties and inconveniences necessarily
connected with the publication of such a work, in a country news-
paper establishment. The following are a few of the errors which
the reader is requested *particularly* to correct:

Page 6. third line from the bottom, for "1st inst.," read *7th inst.*
20. fourteenth line from the top, for "Dr. Barns," read *Dr. Barnes.*
30. line at the bottom, for "1785," read 1758.
39. nineteenth line from the top, for "I cannot look," read *I cannot but
look.*
98. thirteenth line from the top, for "raised," read *revived.*
114. eleventh line from the bottom, for "favorable," read *unfavorable.*
122. ninth line from the top, for "Stillingleet," read *Stillingfleet.*
125. eighth line from the top, for "county," read *country.*
128. twelfth line from the bottom, fo: "Agaba," read *Agabra.*
142. eleventh line from the top, for "needs no better evidence, that is af-
forded," read *one needs no better evidence than is afforded.*
145. third line from the bottom, for "argument," read *arguments.*



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